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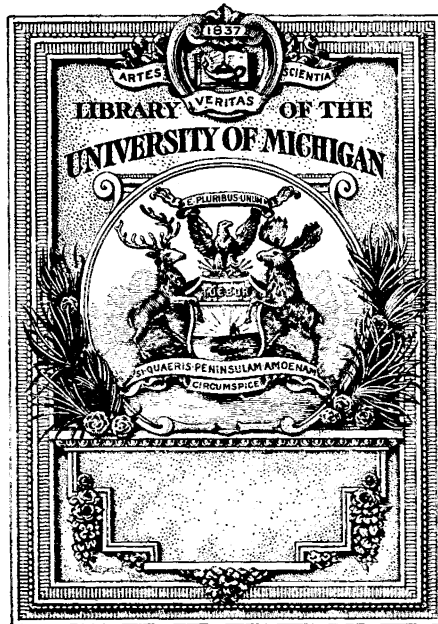
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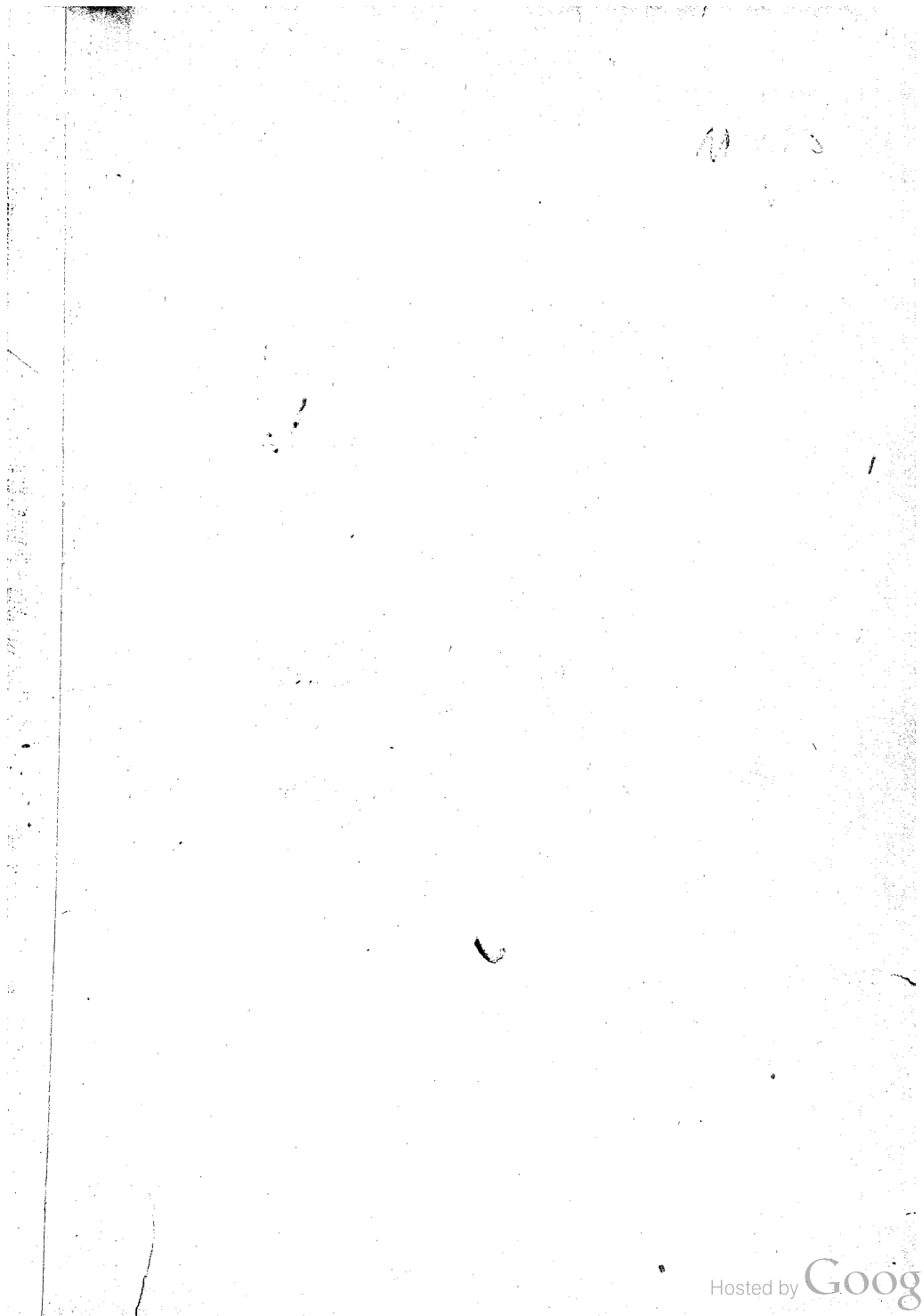
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PLAYS

FROM

M O L I E R E

95675

BY

ENGLISH DRAMATISTS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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LIBRARY EDITION

LONDON

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LIMITED

BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL

GLASGOW, MANCHESTER, AND NEW YORK

1891

848
M720
P72

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INTRODUCTION.

JEAN-BAPTISTE POQUELIN, upholsterer to King Louis XIII., gave his name, Jean-Baptiste, to a son born at Paris in January, 1622. That son, when he became player and dramatist, assumed the name of Molière. Until he was fourteen years old his education was neglected. His father sought to direct his mind to upholstery, and secured for him succession to his own Court office of *valet de chambre tapissier*. The boy had a grandfather who liked comedy, and who took him sometimes to the plays at the *Hôtel de Bourgogne*.

In 1543, when Francis I. ordered the sale and demolition of the *Hôtel de Bourgogne*, and other houses, the players bought it, to build, at their own cost, a theatre upon its site. They opened it in 1548, but were no longer allowed to act plays on the mysteries of religion. They had among their farces *Patelin*, born in the fifteenth century, forefather of *Tartufe*. Translations from Plautus and Terence, from Seneca and from the first plays of the Italians, then enlarged the conception of dramatic art. Jodelle and Garnier, before 1580, laid the foundation of French classical tragedy. Pierre de Larivey, of whose comedies, all adapted from Italian writers, six were published in 1579 and three in 1611, wrote in prose and justified abandonment of verse by arguments like those in Cardinal Bibbiena's prologue to *Calandra*. His example was little followed—even farce held to its octosyllabics—and it remained for Molière not only to perfect the form of comic dialogue in verse, but also to show how wit and wisdom could point every phrase in lightest dialogue of prose. The plays seen at the *Hôtel de Bourgogne* by Molière in his boyhood were of all kinds, and most of them were loosely and carelessly constructed. Hardy and others, by their want of art, aided those tendencies of the times which were provoking a new plea for classical rule. Pierre Corneille, who was fourteen years older than Molière, produced his *Cid* when Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, not yet Molière, was a boy of fourteen. Made-moiselle Beaupré, one of the actresses at the *Hôtel de Bourgogne*, said of Corneille, in those days, that he had done the actors a great wrong. Before his coming they could play pieces that cost but three dollars, and were written in one night; the public was used to them, and they brought much profit to the house; but now the pieces of M. Corneille cost them much more and brought in little gain.

Jean-Baptiste Poquelin had more mind for the theatre than for the shop. He had a mind for it, but a mind untrained, till his father was persuaded to ruin his chance of success as a Court upholsterer, by sending him to school. He went to a Jesuit college, where he had for one

of his teachers Pierre Gassendi, whose philosophy was based on that of Epicurus, and who then divided with Descartes dominion over the philosophers of France. His father being infirm, young Poquelin, at the age of nineteen, took his father's place in the retinue of Louis XIII., during the king's visit to Languedoc in 1641. When he came back, his bent for the stage caused him to join a band of young associates who called themselves *L'Illustre Théâtre*. A tragedy of *Artaxerce* was printed in 1645, as presented by this illustrious theatre. Money left by his mother came to him when he was of age. Resolved to give his whole mind as actor and author to the drama, Jean-Baptiste Poquelin now followed an example set already by other actors in taking a new name, and became Molière.

At first Molière produced, and acted in the provinces, slight pieces imitated from the Italian. He was away with a company of actors in the provinces, acting at Grenoble, Lyons, Rouen, and other places, from 1646 to 1658. At Beziers was the Prince of Conti, who had known Poquelin at college, and was his chief patron before he settled in Paris. Within the five years before 1658, Molière and his company acted before the Prince of Conti the two plays that now represent his earliest dramatic work, *L'Etourdi* and *Le Dépit Amoureux*. Versions of both are given in this volume, one by John Dryden, the other by Sir John Vanbrugh.

In 1658, when Louis XIV. was a youth of twenty, Molière came to Paris, with an introduction from the Prince of Conti to Monsieur the King's only brother, by whom he was presented to the King and the Queen-mother. His company acted that year before their Majesties, on a stage built in a guard-room of the old palace of the Louvre. He and his company were then allowed to settle in Paris; and they played on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, in the *Théâtre du Petit-Bourbon*, which was occupied by Italian comedians on the other days. Even the company at the *Hôtel de Bourgogne* played only three times a week, unless they were drawing the town with a new play. The King's brother gave Molière his patronage, and permitted him to call his actors *La Troupe de Monsieur*. In 1660 Monsieur established them in the *Palais Royal*, on a stage built by Richelieu for the acting of a tragedy to which Richelieu himself had contributed five hundred verses. Here they remained until the death of Molière. The King came often to see Molière act in his own plays, and the dramatist, who never had been poor, grew rich. In 1661, when his age was about forty, Molière married Armande Béjart, many years younger than himself, who did not add to his happiness.

Molière was of good form and stature; brown of complexion, with strongly marked black eyebrows, nose and mouth large, lips thick. There was dignity in his movements, gravity in his whole air, but his mobile features lightened readily into comic expression, and his thoughtful look was softened by habitual kindliness and generosity. He lived in companionship with men of genius, and was a ready friend to poorer comrades in their hours of need.

Molière's three best comedies, *Le Tartufe*, *Le Misanthrope*, and *L'Avare*, were produced in the years 1666 and 1667. This volume

contains the *Tartufe* as turned by Cibber into the *Non-furor*, Wycherley's version of *Le Misanthrope* as *The Plain Dealer*, and Fielding's version of *The Miser*. The lively farce-comedy of *La Médecin Malgré Lui* belongs to the same period of Molière's best strength. It followed the *Misanthrope*, and preceded *Tartufe*, for the acting of *Tartufe* had been delayed by objections of feeble minds that saw an attack upon the gold itself in nailing false coins to the counter.

Molière died on the 17th of February, 1673, aged fifty-one. He had been coughing and spitting blood before he produced his last comedy, *Le Malade Imaginaire*, in which he himself acted. Before the third representation he was so ill that he was advised not to act, but he did act, was seized with a convulsion during the performance, and was taken away dying. He had lived as he died, faithful to his art. Although, like Fielding, he was not a poet, his genius like Fielding's, touched the deeper truths of life, and put the dignity of a true aim into the lightest play of wit. No greater writer of prose comedy has ever lived.

This volume partly represents the influence of Molière on English literature. At the Restoration, in 1660, courtiers who came from Paris knew Molière as actor and dramatist, chief of a *troupe* which had been in Paris for about two years. They had seen his *L'Etourdi* and his *Précieuses Ridicules*, which was first acted in Paris in 1659. Molière's age was, in 1660, thirty-eight, and Dryden's twenty-nine. Dryden began to write plays, with the comedy of the *Wild Gallant*, in 1663. He wanted the light touch of a fashionable libertine that, in comedy, best pleased the Court of Charles the Second. The *Wild Gallant* was not elegantly but vilely coarse—Priapus unpossessed of a Court dress. Dryden's strength was not in writing of this sort. His version of *L'Etourdi*, as Sir Martin Marr-all, was produced in London at the time when Molière produced in Paris his *Tartufe*. Molière's own *L'Etourdi* is in excellent dramatic couplets. Dryden, in part imitation, attempted to intermix blank verse with prose at a time when the art of writing blank verse, developed by Marlowe and perfected by Shakespeare, had been lost among us. But in that year, 1667, the appearance of "*Paradise Lost*" set English blank verse on her feet again. In some places, where the blank verse lines are peculiarly irritating, I have printed them as prose. Dryden's play is best where it departs least from its original, and worst in the interwoven scenes of "*The Feigned Innocence*," which are all his own. In these I have found some omissions to be necessary.

William Wycherley, born in 1640, was educated in France, and returned to England at the Restoration. His version of *Le Misanthrope* as *The Plain Dealer* is said to have been made in the year of its first production in Paris, but it was not acted until 1677, four years after the death of Molière. Wycherley was the founder of what is known as the "Prose Comedy of Manners" in our dramatic literature: that is to say, he learnt from the plays of Molière to put thought into his work, and earn the praise of Dryden—with a glance in the word "*Manly*," at the hero of *The Plain Dealer*—for "*the satire, wit and strength of Manly Wycherley*." Wycherley, like Dryden, not only

Englished Molière, by a free adaptation of the story to the English life and manners of his time, but he also interwove new characters and incidents. In this, however, William Wycherley succeeded as completely as John Dryden failed. The widow Blackacre and her minor, Wycherley's invention, would have contented Molière himself.

John Vanbrugh was nearly thirty years younger than Wycherley, to whose school he belongs, and he too drew strength from Molière. Vanbrugh was dramatist and architect. On his behalf the playful epitaph advised,—

Lie heavy on him, Earth! for he
Laid many heavy loads on thee.

He was both builder and manager of the first house upon the site of what is now known as Her Majesty's Theatre, in the Haymarket. When his management was failing, he sought success by translating for his new theatre, in one season, three plays of Molière. One of them was *Le Dépit Amoureux*, translated as *The Mistake*, which is the play given in this volume. Soon afterwards, in 1706—he was then building Blenheim—Vanbrugh gave himself wholly to his work as architect.

Henry Fielding, before he found his full strength as the author of *Tom Jones*, wrote for the stage. His version of *Le Médecin Malgré Lui* was first produced in the autumn of 1732, when he was twenty-five years old. "One pleasure I enjoy," he said, "from the success of this piece, is a prospect of transplanting successfully some others of Molière's of great value." Accordingly there was produced, on the 17th of February, 1733, Fielding's version of *L'Avare*, or *The Miser*. This was Fielding's best piece of dramatic work.

Colley Cibber was born only two years before Molière's death. His father was a sculptor from Holstein, who designed and executed the bas-relief upon the monument by which the Fire of London was commemorated. Colley Cibber went on the stage when a youth of eighteen, and had produced several plays before he attained his great success with a version of *Tartufe*, that applied, in *The Non-Juror*, with Whig bitterness of party feeling, a general satire on hypocrisy in sacred things to the religion of political opponents. It was directed against Roman Catholics and Non-Jurors, who had sympathized with the Jacobite insurrection of 1715. It was produced while all the passions of the strife were fresh, and it had a success rather political than literary. Pope was of Roman Catholic family, and Cibber's play contained an insult to the Roman Catholics. Its factious loyalty obtained for Colley Cibber the office of Poet Laureate, and its intolerance secured for him the highest gibbet in the "Dunciad."

HENRY MORLEY.

June, 1883.

Plays from Molière

By English Dramatists.



SIR MARTIN MARR-ALL.

(MOLIÈRE'S "L'ÉTOURDI.")

By JOHN DRYDEN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD DARTMOUTH, <i>in love with</i>	MRS. CHRISTIAN, <i>her young niece.</i>
MRS. CHRISTIAN.	MRS. MILLICENT, <i>the swash-buckler's</i>
MR. MOODY, <i>the swash-buckler.</i>	<i>daughter.</i>
SIR MARTIN MARR-ALL, <i>a fool.</i>	ROSE, <i>her maid.</i>
WARNER, <i>his man.</i>	MRS. PREPARATION, <i>woman to the</i>
SIR JOHN SWALLOW, <i>a Kentish</i>	<i>old lady.</i>
<i>knight.</i>	Other Servants, Men and Women.
LADY DUPE, <i>the old lady.</i>	A Carrier. Bailiffs.

SCENE.—COVENT GARDEN.

ACT I.

Enter WARNER solus.

Warn. Where is this master of mine? He is ever out of the way when he should do himself good. This 'tis to serve a coxcomb, one that has no more brains than just those I carry for him. Well, of all fops commend me to him for the greatest; he's so opinioned of his own abilities, that he is ever designing somewhat, and yet he sows his stratagems so shallow, that every daw can pick 'em up: from a plotting fool the Lord deliver me! Here he comes, O! it seems his cousin's with him, then it is not so bad as I imagined.

Enter SIR MARTIN MARR-ALL and LADY DUPE.

Lady Dupe. I think it was well contrived for your access, to lodge her in the same house with you.

Sir Mart. 'Tis pretty well, I must confess.

Warn. Had he plotted it himself, it had been admirable. [*Aside.*

Lady Dupe. For when her father Moody wrote to me to take him lodgings, I so ordered it, the choice seemed his, not mine.

Sir Mart. I have hit of a thing myself sometimes, when wiser heads have missed it ; but that might be mere luck.

Lady Dupe. Fortune does more than wisdom.

Sir Mart. Nay, for that you shall excuse me ; I will not value any man's fortune at a rush. Except he have wit and parts to bear him out. But when do you expect 'em ?

Lady Dupe. This tide will bring them from Gravesend. You had best let your man go as from me, and wait them at the stairs in Durham Yard.

Sir Mart. Lord, cousin, what a do is here with your counsel ! As though I could not have thought of that myself. I could, find in my heart not to send him now—stay a little,—I could soon find out some other way.

Warn. A minute's stay may lose your business.

Sir Mart. Well, go then,—but you must grant, if he had stayed I could have found a better way,—you grant it ?

Lady Dupe. For once I will not stand with you. [*Exit WARNER.*]
'Tis a sweet gentlewoman, this Mrs. Millicent, if you can get her.

Sir Mart. Let me alone for plotting.

Lady Dupe. But, by your favour, sir, 'tis not so easy. Her father has already promised her ; and the young gentleman comes up with them. I partly know the man ;—but the old Squire is humorsome. He's stout, and plain in speech, and in behaviour ; he loves none of the fine town-tricks of breeding, but stands up for the old Elizabeth way in all things. This we must work upon.

Sir Mart. Sure, you think you have to deal with a fool, cousin ?

Enter MRS. CHRISTIAN.

Lady Dupe. O, my dear niece, I have some business with you. [*Whispers.*]

Sir Mart. Well, madam, I'll take one turn here in the Piazzas ; a thousand things are hammering in this head ; 'tis a fruitful noddle, though I say it. [*Exit.*]

Lady Dupe. Go thy ways, for a most conceited fool. But to our business, cousin ; you are young, but I am old, and have had all the love experience that a discreet lady ought to have ; and therefore let me instruct you about the love this rich lord makes to you.

Chr. You know, madam, he's married, so that we cannot work upon that ground of matrimony.

Lady Dupe. But there are advantages enough for you, if you will be wise, and follow my advice.

Chr. Madam, my friends left me to your care, therefore I will wholly follow your counsel with secrecy and obedience.

Lady Dupe. Sweetheart, it shall be the better for you another day. Well then, this Lord that pretends to you, is crafty and false,

as most men are, especially in love ; therefore we must be subtle to meet with all his plots, and have countermines against his works to blow him up.

Chr. As how, madam?

Lady Dupe. Why, girl, he'll make fierce love to you, but you must not suffer him to ruffle you, or steal a kiss ; but you must weep and sigh, and say you'll tell me of it, and that you will not be used so ; and play the innocent just like a child, and seem ignorant of all.

Chr. I warrant you I'll be very ignorant, madam.

Lady Dupe. And be sure, when he has towed you, not to appear at supper that night, that you may fright him.

Chr. No, madam.

Lady Dupe. That he may think you have told me.

Chr. Ay, madam.

Lady Dupe. And keep your chamber, and say your head aches.

Chr. O, most extremely, madam.

Lady Dupe. And lock the door, and admit of no night visits ; at supper I'll ask, where's my cousin ; and being told you are not well, I'll start from the table to visit you, desiring his Lordship not to incommode himself : for I will presently wait on him again.

Chr. But how, when you are returned, madam ?

Lady Dupe. Then somewhat discomposed, I'll say, I doubt the measles or small-pox will seize on you, and then the girl is spoiled ; saying, poor thing, her portion is her beauty and her virtue ; and often send to see how you do, by whispers in my servants' ears, and have those whispers of your health returned to mine ; if his Lordship thereupon asks how you do, I will pretend it was some other thing.

Chr. Right, madam, for that will bring him further in suspense.

Lady Dupe. A hopeful girl ! Then will I eat nothing that night, feigning my grief for you ; but keep his Lordship company at meal, and seem to strive to put my passion off, yet show it still by small mistakes.

Chr. And broken sentences.

Lady Dupe. A dainty girl ! And after supper visit you again, with promise to return straight to his Lordship ; but after I am gone, send an excuse, that I have given you a cordial, and mean to watch that night in person with you.

Chr. His Lordship then will find the prologue of his trouble, doubting I have told you of his ruffling.

Lady Dupe. And more than that, fearing his father should know of it, and his wife, who is a termagant lady ; but when he finds the coast is clear, and his late ruffling known to none but you, he will be drunk with joy.

Chr. Finding my simple innocence, which will inflame him more.

Lady Dupe. Then, what the lion's skin has failed him in, the fox's subtlety must next supply, and that is just, sweetheart, as I would have it ; for crafty folks' treaties are their advantage, especially

when his passion must be satisfied at any rate, and you keep shop to set the price of love : so now you see the market is your own.

Chr. Truly, madam, this is very rational ; and, by the blessing of Heaven upon my poor endeavours, I do not doubt to play my part.

Lady Dupe. My blessing and my prayers go along with thee.

Enter SIR JOHN SWALLOW, MRS. MILLICENT, and ROSE *her Maid.*

Chr. I believe, madam, here is the young heiress you expect, and with her he who is to marry her.

Lady Dupe. However, I am Sir Martin's friend, I must not seem his enemy.

Sir John. Madam, this fair young lady begs the honour to be known to you.

Mill. My father made me hope it, madam.

Lady Dupe. Sweet lady, I believe you have brought all the freshness of the country up to town with you. [*They salute.*]

Mill. I came up, madam, as we country gentlewomen use, at an Easter Term, to the destruction of tarts and cheesecakes, to see a new play, buy a new gown, take a turn in the park, and so down again to sleep with my forefathers.

Sir John. Rather, madam, you are come up to the breaking of many a poor heart, that like mine will languish for you.

Chr. I doubt, madam, you are indisposed with your voyage ; will you please to see the lodgings your father has provided for you ?

Mill. To wait upon you, madam.

Lady Dupe. This is the door ; there is a gentleman will wait you immediately in your lodging, if he might presume on your commands. [*Whispers.*]

Mill. You mean Sir Martin Marr-all ? I am glad he has entrusted his passion with so discreet a person. [*Whispers.*]

Lady Dupe. Sir John, let me entreat you to stay here, that my father may have intelligence where to find us.

Sir John. I shall obey you, madam. [*Exeunt women.*]

Enter SIR MARTIN.

Sir John. Sir Martin Marr-all !—most happily encountered !—how long have you been come to town ?

Sir Mart. Some three days since, or thereabouts ; but I thank God I am very weary on't already.

Sir John. Why, what's the matter, man ?

Sir Mart. My villanous old luck still follows me in gaming. I never throw the dice out of my hand, but my gold goes after 'em. If I go to picquet, though it be but with a novice in't, he will picque and repicque, and capot me twenty times together : and, which most mads me, I lose all my sets, when I want but one of up.

Sir John. The pleasure of play is lost, when one loses at that unreasonable rate.

Sir Mart. But I have sworn not to touch either cards or dice this half-year.

Sir John. The oaths of losing gamesters are most minded ; they

forswear play as an angry servant doth his mistress, because he loves her but too well.

Sir Mart. But I am now taken up with thoughts of another nature ; I am in love, sir.

Sir John. That's the worst game you could have played at, scarce one woman in a hundred will play with you upon the square ; you venture at more uncertainty than at a lottery ; for you set your heart to a whole sex of blanks. But is your mistress widow, wife, or maid ?

Sir Mart. I can assure you, sir, mine is a maid ;
The heiress of a wealthy family,
Fair to a miracle.

Sir John. Does she accept your service ?

Sir Mart. I am the only person in her favour.

Enter WARNER.

Sir John. Is she of town or country ?

Warn. [*aside.*] How's this ?

Sir Mart. She is of Kent, near Canterbury.

Warn. What does he mean ?—this is his rival. [*Aside.*

Sir John. Near Canterbury, say you ? I have a small estate lies thereabouts, and more concerns than one besides.

Sir Mart. I'll tell you then ; being at Canterbury,
It was my fortune, once in the cathedral church——

Warn. What do you mean, sir, to entrust this man with your affair thus ?

Sir Mart. Trust him ? why he's a friend of mine.

Warn. No matter for that ; hark you, a word, sir ——

Sir Mart. Prithee, leave fooling :—and, as I was saying—I was in the church when I first saw this fair one.

Sir John. Her name, sir, I beseech ?

Warn. For Heaven's sake, sir, have a care !

Sir Mart. Thou art such a coxcomb—her name's Millicent.

Warn. Sir, sir, sir, what do you mean ?

Sir John. Millicent, say you ? That's the name of my mistress.

Sir Mart. Lord ! what luck is that now ! well, sir, it happened one of her gloves fell down, I stooped to take it up, and in the stooping made her a compliment——

Warn. Nothing can hold him—now will this thick-skulled master of mine tell the whole story to his rival——

Sir Mart. You'll say 'twas strange, sir, but at the first glance we cast on one another, both our hearts leaped within us, our souls met at our eyes, and, with a tickling kind of pain, fled to each other's breast, and in one moment settled as close and warm as if they long had been acquainted with their lodging. I followed her somewhat at a distance, because her father was with her.

Warn. Yet hold, sir——

Sir Mart. Saucy rascal, avoid my sight ; must you tutor me ?—so, sir, not to trouble you, I inquired out her father's house, without

whose knowledge I did court the daughter, and both then and often since, coming to Canterbury, I received many proofs of her kindness to me.

Warn. You had best tell him, too, that I am acquainted with her maid, and manage your love underhand with her.

Sir Mart. Well remembered i'faith ; I thank thee for that : I had forgot it, I protest !—my valet de chambre, whom you see here with me, grows me acquainted with her woman——

Warn. O, sir——

Sir Mart. In fine, sir, this maid being much in her mistress's favour, so well solicited my cause, that, in fine, I gained from fair Mistress Millicent an assurance of her kindness, and an engagement to marry none but me.

Warn. 'Tis very-well ! you've made a fair discovery !——

Sir John. A most pleasant relation I assure you : you are a happy man, sir ! But what occasion brought you now to London ?

Sir Mart. That was in expectation to meet my mistress here. She wrote me word from Canterbury, she and her father shortly would be here.

Sir John. She and her father, said you, sir ?

Warn. Tell him, sir, for Heaven's sake, tell him all——

Sir Mart. So I will, sir, without your bidding ; her father and she are come up already, that's the truth on't, and are to lodge, by my contrivance, in yon house, the master of which is a cunning rascal as any in town. Him I have made my own, for I lodge there.

Warn. You do ill, sir, to speak so scandalously of my landlord.

Sir Mart. Peace, or I'll break your fool's head,—so that by his means I shall have free egress and regress when I please, sir,—without her father's knowledge.

Warn. I am out of patience to hear this——

Sir John. Methinks you might do well, sir, to speak openly to her father.

Sir Mart. Thank you for that i'faith ; in speaking to old Moody I may soon spoil all.

Warn. So, now he has told her father's name 'tis past recovery.

Sir John. Is her father's name Moody, say you ?

Sir Mart. Is he of your acquaintance ?

Sir John. Yes, sir, I know him for a man

Who is too wise for you to over-reach.

I am certain he will never marry his daughter to you.

Sir Mart. Why, there's the jest on't :

He shall never know it : 'tis but your

Keeping of my counsel ; I'll do as much for you.

Mum——

Sir John. No, sir, I'll give you better : trouble not yourself about this lady ; her affections are otherwise engaged. To my knowledge—hark in your ear—her father hates a gamester like a devil ! I'll keep your counsel for that too.

Sir Mart. Nay, but this is not all, dear Sir John.

Sir John. This is all, I assure you ! only I will make bold
To seek your mistress out another lodging.

[*Exit.*

Warn. Your affairs are now put into an excellent posture. Thank
your incomparable discretion—this was a stratagem my shallow
wit could ne'er have reached, to make a confidant of my rival.

Sir Mart. I hope thou art not in earnest, man !—is he my rival ?

Warn. Ah, he has not found it out all this while !

Well, sir, for a quick apprehension let you alone.

Sir Mart. How the devil cam'st thou to know on't ?

And why the devil didst thou not tell me on't ?

Warn. To the first of your devils, I answer, her maid Rose told
me on't ; to the second, I wish a thousand devils take him that
would not hear me.

Sir Mart. O, unparalleled misfortune !

Warn. O, unparalleled ignorance ! Why, he left her father at the
water-side while he led the daughter to her lodging, whither I
directed him ; so that, if you had not laboured to the contrary,
fortune had placed you in the same house with your mistress, with-
out the least suspicion of your rival, or of her father ; but 'tis well,
you have satisfied your talkative humour. I hope you have some
new project of your own to set all right again ; for my part, I con-
fess, all my designs for you are wholly ruined ; the very foundations
of 'em are blown up.

Sir Mart. Prithee, insult not over the destiny of a poor undone
lover. I am punished enough for my indiscretion, in my despair, and
have nothing to hope for now but death.

Warn. Death is a bugword ; things are not brought to that
extremity. I'll cast about to save all yet.

Enter LADY DUPE.

Lady Dupe. Oh, Sir Martin ! yonder has been such a stir within.
Sir John, I fear, smokes your design, and by all means would have
the old man remove his lodging ; surely your man has not played
false.

Warn. Like enough I have : I am coxcomb sufficient to do it ;
my master knows that none but such a great calf as I could have
done it,—such an overgrown ass, a self-conceited idiot as I—

Sir Mart. Nay, Warner—

Warn. Pray, sir, let me alone : what is it to you if I rail upon
myself ? Now could I break my own logger-head.

Sir Mart. Nay, sweet Warner.

Warn. What a good master have I !—and I to ruin him !—Oh !
beast !—

Lady Dupe. Not to discourage you wholly, Sir Martin, this storm
is partly over.

Sir Mart. As how, dear cousin ?

Lady Dupe. When I heard Sir John complain of the landlord, I
took the first hint of it, and joined with him, saying, if he were such

an one I would have nothing to do with him. In short, I rattled him so well, that Sir John was the first who did desire they might be lodged with me, not knowing that I was your kinswoman.

Sir Mart. A plague, now I think on't, I could have found out this myself—

Warn. Are you there again, sir?—Now as I have a soul—

Sir Mart. Mum, good Warner, I did but forget myself a little. I leave myself wholly to you and my cousin; get but my mistress for me, and claim whate'er reward you can desire.

Warn. Hope of reward will diligence beget,
Find you the money, and I'll find the wit.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Enter LADY DUPE and MRS. CHRISTIAN.

Chr. It happened, madam, just as you said it would; but was he so concerned for my feigned sickness?

Lady Dupe. So much that Moody and his daughter, our new guests, took notice of the trouble, but the cause was kept too close for strangers to divine.

Chr. Heaven grant he be but deep enough in love, and then—

Lady Dupe. And then thou shalt distil him into gold, my girl.
Yonder he comes, I'll not be seen:—you know
Your lesson, child.

[*Exit.*

Chr. I warrant you.

Enter LORD DARTMOUTH.

Lord. Pretty Mistress Christian,
How glad am I to meet you thus alone!

Chr. Oh, the Father! what will become of me now?

Lord. No harm, I warrant you, but why are you so afraid?

Chr. A poor weak innocent creature as I am, Heaven of his mercy, how I quake and tremble! I have not yet clawed off your last ill-usage, and now I feel my old fit come again, my ears tingle already, and my back shuts and opens; ay, just so it began before.

Lord. Nay, my sweet mistress, be not so unjust, to suspect any new attempt: I am too penitent for my last fault, so soon to sin again. I hope you did not tell it to your aunt.

Chr. The more fool I, I did not.

Lord. You never shall repent your goodness to me; but may not I presume there was some little kindness in it, which moved you to conceal my crime?

Chr. Methought I would not have my aunt angry with you, for all this earthly good. But yet I'll never be alone with you again.

Lord. Pretty innocence! let me sit nearer to you:

You do not understand what love I bear you;

I vow it is so pure—

My soul's not sullied with one spot of sin:

Were you a daughter or a sister to me,
With a more holy flame I could not burn.

Chr. Nay, now you speak high words ; I cannot understand you.

Lord. The business of my life shall be but how to make your fortune, and my care and study to advance and see you settled in the world.

Chr. I humbly thank your lordship.

Lord. Thus I would sacrifice my life and fortunes,
And in return you cruelly destroy me.

Chr. I never meant you any harm, not I.

Lord. Then what does this white enemy so near me?

[*Touching her hand, gloved.*

Sure 'tis your champion, and you arm it thus to bid defiance to me.

Chr. Nay, fie, my Lord, in faith you are to blame.

[*Pulling her hand away.*

Lord. But I am for fair wars.

Chr. What does your Lordship mean?

Lord. I fear you bear some spells and charms about you,
And, madam, that's against the law of arms.

Chr. My aunt charged me not to pull off my glove for fear of sun-burning my hand.

Lord. She did well to keep it from your eyes, but I will thus preserve it.

[*Hugging her bare hand.*

Chr. Why do you crush it so? nay, now you hurt me ; nay—if you squeeze it ne'er so hard, there's nothing to come out on't—fie, is this loving one? Ne'er stir, my Lord, I must cry out—

Lord. Then I must stop your mouth. This ruby for a kiss—that is but one ruby for another.

Chr. This is worse and worse.

Lady [within]. Why, niece, where are you, niece?

Chr. Do you hear, my aunt calls? I shall be hanged for staying with you. Let me go, my Lord.

[*Gets from him.*

Enter LADY DUPE.

Lady Dupe. My Lord, Heaven bless me, what makes your Lordship here.

Lord. I was just wishing for you, madam ; your niece and I have been so laughing at the blunt humour of your country gentleman—I must go pass an hour with him.

[*Exit.*

Chr. You made a little too much haste ; I was just exchanging a kiss for a ruby.

Lady Dupe. No harm done ; it will make him come on the faster :
Never full-gorge an hawk you mean to fly :

The next will be a necklace of pearl, I warrant you.

Chr. But what must I do next?

Lady Dupe. Tell him I grew suspicious, and examined you
Whether he made not love, which you denied.

Then tell him how my maids and daughters watch you ;
So that you tremble when you see his Lordship.

B

Chr. And that your daughters are so envious, that they would raise a false report to ruin me.

Lady Dupe. Therefore you desire his Lordship,
As he loves you, of which you are confident,
Henceforward to forbear his visits to you.

Chr. But how, if he should take me at my word?

Lady Dupe. Why, he leaves you, and there's an end on't : but fear not that, hold out his messages, and then he'll write ; and that's it, my bird, which you must drive it to : then all his letters will be such ecstasies, such vows and promises, which you must answer short and simply, yet still ply out of them your advantages.

Chr. But, madam, he's in the house, he will not write.

Lady Dupe. You fool—he'll write from the next chamber to you. And, rather than fail, send his page-post with it upon a hobby-horse : then grant a meeting ; but tell me of it, and I'll prevent him by my being there ; he'll curse me, but I care not. When you are alone he'll urge his love, which answer you with scorn and anger.

Then when he sees no other thing will move you,
He'll sign a portion to you beforehand :

Take hold of that, and then of what you will.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter SIR JOHN, MRS. MILLICENT, and ROSE.

Sir John. Now, fair Mrs. Millicent, you see your chamber ;
Your father will be busy a few minutes, and in the meantime permit me the happiness to wait on you.

Mill. Methinks you might have chosen us better lodgings.
This house is full ; the other, we saw first, was more convenient.

Sir John. For you perhaps, but not for me :
You might have met a lover there, but I a rival.

Mill. What rival?

Sir John. You know Sir Martin, I need not name it to you.

Mill. I know more men besides him.

Sir John. But you love none besides him. Can you deny your affection to him?

Mill. You have vexed me so, I will not satisfy you.

Sir John. Then, I perceive, I am not likely to be so much obliged to you as I was to him.

Mill. This is romance—I'll not believe a word on't —

Sir John. That's as you please ; however 'tis believed, his wit will not much credit your choice. Madam, do justice to us both ; pay his ingratitude and folly with your scorn ; my service with your love. By this time your father stays for me : I shall be discreet enough to keep this fault of yours from him. The lawyers wait for us to draw your jointure ; and I would beg your pardon for my absence, but that my crime is punished in itself. [Exit.]

Mill. Could I suspect this usage from a favoured servant !

Rose. First hear Sir Martin ere you quite condemn him.
Consider, 'tis a rival who accused him.

Mill. Speak not a word in his behalf—

Methought, too, Sir John called him fool.

Rose. Indeed he has a rare way of acting a fool, and does it so naturally, it can be scarce distinguished.

Mill. Nay, he has wit enough, that's certain.

Rose. How blind love is !

Enter WARNER.

Mill. How now, what's his business? I wonder, after such a crime, if his master has the face to send him to me !

Rose. How durst you venture hither? If either Sir John or my old master see you.

Warn. Pish ! they are both gone out.

Rose. They went but to the next street ; ten to one but they return and catch you here.

Warn. Twenty to one I am gone before, and save them a labour.

Mill. What says that fellow to you? What business can he have here?

Warn. Lord, that your Ladyship should ask that question, knowing whom I serve !

Mill. I'll hear nothing from your master.

Warn. Never breathe, but this anger becomes your Ladyship most admirably ; but though you'll hear nothing from him, I hope I may speak a word or two to you from myself, madam.

Rose. 'Twas a sweet prank your master played us : a lady's well helped up that trusts her honour in such a person's hands : to tell all so—and to his rival too ! Excuse him if thou canst. [*Aside.*]

Warn. How should I excuse him? thou knowest he is the greatest fop in Nature— [*Aside to ROSE.*]

Rose. But my lady does not know it. If she did—

Mill. I'll have no whispering.

Warn. Alas ! madam, I have not the confidence to speak out, unless you can take mercy on me.

Mill. For what?

Warn. For telling Sir John you loved my master, madam.

But sure I little thought he was his rival.

Rose. The witty rogue has taken it on himself. [*Aside.*]

Mill. Your master then is innocent?

Warn. Why, could your ladyship suspect him guilty?

Pray tell me, do you think him ungrateful,
Or a fool?

Mill. I think him neither.

Warn. Take it from me, you see not the depth of him.

But when he knows what thoughts you harbour of him,
As I am faithful and must tell him—

I wish he does not take some pet, and leave you.

Mill. Thou art not mad, I hope, to tell him on't ;
If thou dost, I'll be sworn, I'll forswear it to him.

Warn. Upon condition then you'll pardon me,
I'll see what I can do to hold my tongue.

Mill. This evening, in St. James's Park, I'll meet him.

[*Knock within.*]

Warn. He shall not fail you, madam.

Rose. Somebody knocks—oh, madam, what shall we do!

'Tis Sir John, I hear his voice.

Warn. What will become of me?

Mill. Step quickly behind that door.

[*He goes out.*]

To them SIR JOHN.

Mill. You've made a quick dispatch, sir.

Sir John. We have done nothing, madam, our man of law was not within—but I must look some writings.

Mill. Where are they laid?

Sir John. In the portmanteau in the drawing-room.

[*Is going to the door.*]

Mill. Pray stay a little, sir.

Warn. [*at the door.*] He must pass just by me; and if he sees me, I am but a dead man.

Sir John. Why are you thus concerned? why do you hold me?

Mill. Only a word or two I have to tell you.

'Tis of importance to you——

Sir John. Give me leave——

Mill. I must not before I discover the plot to you.

Sir John. What plot?

Mill. Sir Martin's servant, like a rogue, comes hither
To tempt me from his master, to have met him.

Warn. [*at the door.*] Now would I had a good bag of gunpowder
at my back, to ram me into some hole.

Mill. For my part, I was so startled at the message,
That I shall scarcely be myself these two days.

Sir John. Oh, that I had the rascal! I would teach him
To come upon such errands.

Warn. [*at the door.*] Oh, for a gentle composition now!
An arm or leg I would give willingly.

Sir John. What answer did you make the villain?

Mill. I over-reached him clearly, by a promise
Of an appointment at a place I named,
Where I ne'er meant to come: but would have had
The pleasure first to tell you how I served him.

Sir John. And then to chide your mean suspicion of me,
Indeed I wondered you should love a fool.
But where did you appoint to meet him?

Mill. In Gray's Inn Walks.

Warn. [*at the door.*] By this light, she has put the change upon
him!

O sweet woman-kind! how I love thee for that heavenly gift of lying!

Sir John. For this evening I will be his mistress ;
He shall meet another Penelope than he suspects.

Mill. But stay not long away.

Sir John. You over-joy me, madam.

[*Exit.*

Warn. [*entering*]. Is he gone, madam ?

Mill. As far as Gray's Inn Walks ; now I have time to walk the other way, and see thy master.

Warn. Rather let him come hither. I have laid a plot shall send his rival far enough from watching him ere long.

Mill. Art thou in earnest ?

Warn. 'Tis so designed ; Fate cannot hinder it. Our landlord, where we lie, vexed that his lodgings should be so left by Sir John, is resolved to be revenged, and I have found the way. You'll see the effect on't presently.

Rose. O heavens ! the door opens again, and Sir John is returned once more.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir John. Half my business was forgot ; you did not tell me when you were to meet him. Ho ! what makes this rascal here ?

Warn. 'Tis well you're come, sir, else I must have left untold a message I have for you.

Sir John. Well, what's your business, sirrah ?

Warn. We must be private first ; 'tis only for your ear.

Rose. I shall admire his wit, if in this plunge he can get off.

Warn. I came hither, sir, by my master's order——

Sir John. I'll reward you for it, sirrah, immediately.

Warn. When you know all, I shall deserve it, sir. I came to sound the virtue of your mistress, which I have done so cunningly, I have at last obtained the promise of a meeting. But my good master, whom I must confess more generous than wise, knowing you had a passion for her, is resolved to quit. And, sir, that you may see how much he loves you, sent me in private to advise you still to have an eye upon her actions.

Sir John. Take this diamond for thy good news, and give thy master my acknowledgments.

Warn. Thus the world goes, my masters ; he that will cozen you, commonly gets your good-will into the bargain. [*Aside.*

Sir John. Madam, I am now satisfied of all sides ; first of your truth, then of Sir Martin's friendship. In short, I find you two cheated each other, both to be true to me.

Mill. Warner is got off, as I would wish, and the knight overreached.

Enter to them the LANDLORD, disguised like a Carrier.

Rose. How now ? what would this carrier have ?

Warn. This is our landlord, whom I told you of ; but keep your countenance——

[*Aside to her.*

Landl. I was looking hereaway for one Sir John Swallow ; they told me I might hear news of him in this house.

Sir John. Friend, I am the man : what have you to say to me ?

Landl. Nay, 'faith, sir, I am not so good a schollard to say much ; but I have have a letter for you in my pouch. There's plaguy news in't, I can tell you that.

Sir John. From whom is your letter ?

Landl. From your old Uncle Anthony.

Sir John. Give me your letter quickly.

Landl. Nay, soft and fair goes far—— Hold you, hold you. It is not in this pocket.

Sir John. Search in the other then ; I stand on thorns.

Landl. I think I feel it now ; this should be who ?

Sir John. Pluck it out then.

Landl. I'll pluck out my spectacles, and see first. [Reads.
To Mr. Paul Grimbald——Apprentice to——No, that's not for you, sir—that's for the son of the brother of the nephew of the cousin of my gossip Dobson.

Sir John. Prithree despatch ; dost thou not know the contents on't ?

Landl. Yes, as well as I do my *Pater Noster*.

Sir John. Well, what's the business on't ?

Landl. Nay, no great business ; 'tis but only that your worship's father's dead.

Sir John. My loss is beyond expression ! How died he ?

Landl. He went to bed as well to see to as any man in England, and when he awakened the next morning——

Sir John. What then ?

Landl. He found himself stark dead.

Sir John. Well, I must of necessity take orders for my father's funeral, and my estate ; Heaven knows with what regret I leave you, madam.

Mill. But are you in such haste, sir ? I see you take all occasions to be from me.

Sir John. Dear madam, say not so, a few days will, I hope, return me to you.

To them SIR MARTIN.

Noble Sir Martin, the welcomest man alive !
Let me embrace my friend.

Rose. How untowardly he returns the salute ? Warner will be found out. [Aside.

Sir John. Well, friend, you have obliged me to you eternally.

Sir Mart. How have I obliged you, sir ? I would have you to know I scorn your words ; and I would I were hanged if it be not the farthest of my thoughts.

Mill. O cunning youth, he acts the fool most naturally.
Were we alone, how would we laugh together !

Sir John. This is a double generosity,
To do me favours and conceal 'em from me ;
But honest Warner here has told me all. [Aside.

Sir Mart. What has the rascal told you?

Sir John. Your plot to try my mistress for me—you understand me, concerning your appointment.

Warn. Sir, I desire to speak in private with you.

Sir Mart. This impertinent rascal, when I am most busy, I am ever troubled with him.

Warn. But it concerns you I should speak with you, good sir.

Sir Mart. That's a good one i'faith, thou knowest breeding well, that I should whisper with a serving-man before company.

Warn. Remember, sir, last time it had been better—

Sir Mart. Peace, or I'll make you feel my double fists.—If I don't frighten him, the saucy rogue will call me fool before the company.

Mill. That was acted most naturally again. [Aside.

Sir John [to him]. But what needs this dissembling, since you are resolved to quit my mistress to me?

Sir Mart. I quit my mistress! that's a good one i'faith.

Mill. Tell him you have forsaken me. [Aside.

Sir Mart. I understand you, madam, you would save A quarrel; but i'faith I am not so base : I'll see him hanged first.

Warn. Madam, my master is convinced, in prudence He should say so; but love o'ermasters him : When you are gone perhaps he may.

Mill. I'll go then : gentlemen, your servant ; I see my presence brings constraint to the company.

[Exit MILLICENT and ROSE.

Sir John. I'm glad she's gone; now we may talk more freely; for if you have not quitted her, you must.

Warn. Pray, sir, remember yourself; did not you send me of a message to Sir John, that for his friendship you had left Mrs. Millicent?

Sir Mart. Why, what an impudent lying rogue art thou!

Sir John. How's this! Has Warner cheated me?

Warn. Do not suspect it in the least : you know, sir, it was not generous before a lady, to say he quitted her.

Sir John. O! was that it?

Warn. That was all : say yes, good Sir John—or I'll swinge you. [Aside.

Sir Mart. Yes, good Sir John.

Warn. That's well; once in his life he has heard good counsel. [Aside.

Sir Mart. Heigh, heigh, what makes my landlord here? he has put on a fool's coat, I think, to make us laugh.

Warn. The devil's in him; he's at it again; his folly's like a sore in a surfeited horse, cure it in one place; and it breaks out in another. [Aside.

Sir Mart. Honest landlord, i'faith, and what makes you here?

Sir John. Are you acquainted with this honest man?

Landl. Take heed what you say, sir. [*To SIR MARTIN, softly.*]

Sir Mart. Take heed what I say sir, why?—who should I be afraid of?—of you, sir?—I say, sir, I know him, sir; and I have reason to know him, sir; for I am sure I lodge in his house, sir—nay, never think to terrify me, sir; 'tis my landlord here in Charles Street, sir.

Landl. Now I expect to be paid for the news I brought him.

Sir John. Sirrah! Did not you tell me that my father—

Landl. Is in very good health, for aught I know, sir; I beseech you to trouble yourself no farther concerning him.

Sir John. Who set you on to tell this lie?

Sir Mart. Aye, who set you on, sirrah? This was a rogue that would cozen us both; he thought I did not know him; down on your marrow-bones, and confess the truth: have you no tongue, you rascal?

Sir John. Sure 'tis some silenced minister: he's grown so fat, he cannot speak.

Landl. Why, sir, if you would know, 'twas for your sake I did it.

Warn. For my master's sake!—why, you impudent varlet, do you think to escape us with a lie?

Sir John. How was it for his sake?

Warn. 'Twas for his own, sir; he heard you were the occasion the lady lodged not at his house, and so he invented this lie; partly to revenge himself of you; and partly, I believe, in hope to get her once again, when you were gone.

Sir John. Fetch me a cudgel, prithee.

Landl. O good sir! if you beat me, I shall run into oil immediately.

Warn. Hang him, rogue, he's below your anger: I'll maul him for you—the rogue's so big, I think 'twill ask two days to beat him a'l over. [*Beats him.*]

Landl. O rogue, O villain, Warner! bid him hold, and I'll confess, sir.

Warn. Get you gone without replying: must such as you be prating? [*Beats him out.*]

Enter ROSE.

Rose. Sir, dinner waits you on the table.

Sir John. Friend, will you go along, and take part of a bad repast?

Sir Mart. Thank you; but I am just risen from table.

Warn. Now he might sit with his mistress, and has not the wit to find it out. [*Aside.*]

Sir John. You shall be very welcome.

Sir Mart. I have no stomach, sir.

Warn. Get you in with a vengeance. You have a better stomach than you think you have. [*Pushes him.*]

Sir Mart. This hungry Diego rogue would shame me; he thinks a gentleman can eat like a serving-man.

Sir John. If you will not, adieu, dear sir ; in anything command me. [Exit.]

Sir Mart. Now we are alone ; haven't I carried matters bravely, sirrah ?

Warn. O yes, yes ; you deserve sugar-plums : first, for your quarrelling with Sir John ; then for discovering your landlord ; and lastly, for refusing to dine with your mistress. All this is since the last reckoning was wiped out.

Sir Mart. Then why did my landlord disguise himself, to make a fool of us ?

Warn. You have so little brains, that a penn'orth of butter melted under them, would set 'em afloat : he put on that disguise to rid you of your rival.

Sir Mart. Why was not I worthy to keep your counsel, then ?

Warn. It had been much at one : you would but have drunk the secret down, and let it out to the next company.

Sir Mart. Well, I find I am a miserable man ; I have lost my mistress, and may thank myself for it.

Warn. You'll not confess you are a fool, I warrant.

Sir Mart. Well, I am a fool, if that will satisfy you ; but what am I the nearer for being one ?

Warn. O yes, much the nearer ; for now fortune's bound to provide for you : as hospitals are built for lame people, because they cannot help themselves. Well—I have yet a project in my pate.

Sir Mart. Dear rogue, what is it ?

Warn. Excuse me for that ; but while 'tis set a working, you would do well to screw yourself into her father's good opinion.

Sir Mart. If you will not tell me, my mind gives me I shall discover it again.

Warn. I'll lay it as far out of your reach as I can possible.

For secrets are edged tools,
And must be kept from children, and from fools. [Exeunt.]

ACT III.

Enter ROSE and WARNER meeting.

Rose. Your worship's most happily encountered.

Warn. Your ladyship's most fortunately met.

Rose. I was going to your lodging.

Warn. My business was to yours.

Rose. I have something to say to you, that——

Warn. I have that to tell you——

Rose. Understand then——

Warn. If you'll hear me——

Rose. I believe that——

Warn. I am of opinion that——

Rose. Prithee hold thy peace a little, till I have done.

Warn. Cry you mercy, Mistress Rose ; I'll not dispute your ancient privileges of talking.

Rose. My mistress, knowing Sir John was to be abroad upon business this afternoon, has asked leave to see a play ; and Sir John has so great a confidence of your master, that he will trust nobody with her but him.

Warn. If my master gets her out, I warrant her he shall show her a better play than any is at either of the houses ;—here they are : I'll run and prepare him to wait upon her. [Exit.]

Enter OLD MOODY, MRS. MILLICENT *and* LADY DUPE.

Mill. My hoods and scarfs there, quickly.

Lady Dufe. Send to call a coach there.

Mood. But what kind of man is this Sir Martin, with whom you are to go ?

Lady. A plain downright country gentleman, I assure you.

Mood. I like him much the better for't ; for I hate one of those you call a man of the town, one of those empty fellows of mere outside : they've nothing of the true old English manliness.

Rose. I confess, sir, a woman's in a sad condition that has nothing to trust to but a perriwig above, and a well-trimmed shoe below.

To them SIR MARTIN.

Mill. This, sir, is Sir John's friend ; he is for your humour, sir ; he is no man o' the town, but bred up in the old Elizabeth way of plainness.

Sir Mart. Ay, madam, your ladyship may say your pleasure of me.

To them WARNER.

Warn. How got he here before me ? 'Tis very unlucky I could not see him first——

Sir Mart. But as for painting, music, poetry, and the like, I'll say this of myself——

Warn. I'll say that for him,—my master understands none of 'em, I assure you, sir.

Sir Mart. You impudent rascal, hold your tongue. I must rid my hands of this fellow ; the rogue is ever discrediting me before company.

Mood. Never trouble yourself about it, sir, for I like a man that——

Sir Mart. I know you do, sir, and therefore I hope you'll think never the worse of me for his prating ; for, though I do not boast of my own good parts——

Warn. He has none to boast of, upon my faith, sir.

Sir Mart. Give him not the hearing, sir ; for, if I may believe my friends, they have flattered me with an opinion of more——

Warn. Of more than their flattery can make good, sir—'tis true, he tells you they have flattered him ; but, in my conscience, he is the most downright simple-natured creature in the world.

Sir Mart. I shall consider you hereafter, sirrah ; but I am sure, in all companies I pass for a virtuoso.

Mood. Virtuoso ! What's that too ? Is not virtue enough, without *O so* ?

Sir Mart. You have reason, sir !

Mood. There he is again, too ; the town-phrase, a great compliment, I wis. You have reason, sir ; that is, you are no beast, sir.

Warn. A word in private, sir ; you mistake this old man ; he loves neither painting, music, nor poetry ; yet recover yourself, if you have any brains. *[Aside to him.]*

Sir Mart. Say you so ? I'll bring all about again, I warrant you — I beg your pardon a thousand times, sir ; I vow to gad I am not master of any of those perfections ; for, in fine, sir, I am wholly ignorant of painting, music, and poetry ; only some rude escapes — but, in fine, they are such, that, in fine, sir —

Warn. This is worse than all the rest. *[Aside.]*

Mood. Ods bobs. One word more of all this gibberish, and old Madge shall fly about your ears : what is this *in fine*, he keeps such a coil with too ?

Mill. 'Tis a phrase a-la-mode, sir, and is used in conversation now, as a whiff of tobacco was formerly, in the midst of a discourse, for a thinking while.

Lady Dupe. In plain English, *in fine* is, in the end, sir.

Mood. But, ods bobs, there's no end on't methinks : if thou wilt have a foolish word to lard thy lean discourse with, take an English one when thou speakest English ; as, so sir, and, then sir, and so forth, 'tis a more manly kind of nonsense ; and a plague of *in fine*, for I'll hear no more on't.

Warn. He's gravelled, and I must help him out. *[Aside.]*

Madam, there's a coach at door to carry you to the play.

Sir Mart. Which house do you mean to go to ?

Mill. The Duke's, I think.

Sir Mart. 'Tis a vile play, and has nothing in't.

Mill. Then let us to the King's.

Sir Mart. That's e'en as bad.

Warn. This is past enduring. *[Aside.]*

There was an ill play set up, sir, on the posts, but I can assure you the bills are altered since you saw them, and now there are two admirable comedies at both houses.

Mood. But my daughter loves serious plays.

Warn. They are tragi-comedies, sir, for both.

Sir Mart. I have heard her say she loves none but tragedies.

Mood. Where have you heard her say so, sir ?

Warn. Sir, you forget yourself, you never saw her in your life before.

Sir Mart. What, not at Canterbury, in the cathedral church there ? This is the impudentest rascal —

Warn. Mum, sir —

Sir Mart. Ah, lord, what have I done ! As I hope to be saved, sir, it was before I was aware ; for if ever I set eyes on her before this day, I wish —

Mood. This fellow is not so much fool, as he makes one believe he is.

Mill. I thought he would be discovered for a wit : this 'tis to overact one's part !

[*Aside.*]

Mood. Come away, daughter, I will not trust you in his hands ; there is more in't than I imagined.

[*Exeunt* MOODY, MILLICENT, LADY DUPE, and ROSE.]

Sir Mart. Why do you frown upon me so, when you know your looks go to the heart of me ? what have I done besides a little *lapsus lingua* ?

Warn. Why, who says you have done anything ? ye are a mere innocent.

Sir Mart. As the child that's to be born, in my intentions ; if I know how I have offended myself any more than in one word—

Warn. But don't follow me, however—I have nothing to say to you.

Sir Mart. I'll follow you to the world's end, till you forgive me.

Warn. I am resolved to lead you a dance then. [*Exit, running.*]

Sir Mart. The rogue has no mercy in him, but I must mollify him with money. [*Exit.*]

Enter LADY DUPE.

Lady Dupe. Truly my little cousin's the aptest scholar, and takes out love's lessons so exactly, that I joy to see it : she has got already the bond of two thousand pounds sealed for her portion, which I keep for her ; a pretty good beginning : Marc Antony wooed not at so dear a price.

Enter WARNER and ROSE.

Rose. A mischief upon all fools ! Do you think your master has not done wisely ? first to mistake our old man's humour, then to dispraise the plays ; and lastly, to discover his acquaintance with my mistress : my old master has taken such a jealousy of him, that he will never admit him into his sight again.

Warn. Thou makest thyself a greater fool than he, by being angry at what he cannot help—I have been angry with him too, but these friends have taken up the quarrel—[*Shows gold*]. Look you, he has sent these mediators to mitigate your wrath : here are twenty of them have made a long voyage from Guinea, to kiss your hands : and, when the match is made, there are a hundred more in readiness to be your humble servants.

Rose. Rather than fall out with you, I'll take them : but, I confess, it troubles me to see so loyal a lover have the heart of an emperor, and yet scarce the brains of a cobbler.

Warn. Well, what device can we two get betwixt us, to separate Sir John Swallow and thy mistress ?

Rose. I cannot on the sudden tell ; but I hate him worse than foul weather without a coach.

Warn. Then I'll see if my project will be luckier than thine.

Where are the papers concerning the jointure I have heard you speak of?

Rose. They lie within, in three great bags, some twenty quires of paper in each bundle, with six lines in a sheet ; but there is a little paper where all the business lies.

Warn. Where is it ? Canst thou help me to it ?

Rose. By good chance he gave it to my custody before he set out for London. You came in good time ; here it is, I was carrying it to him : just now he sent for it.

Warn. So, this I will secure in my pocket ; when thou art asked for it, make two or three bad faces, and say, 'twas left behind ; by this means he must of necessity leave the town to see for it in Kent.

Enter SIR JOHN, SIR MARTIN, and MRS. MILLICENT.

Sir John. 'Tis no matter, though the old man be suspicious. I knew the story all beforehand ; and since then you have fully satisfied me of your true friendship to me. Where are the writings ?

[*To ROSE.*

Rose. Sir, I beg your pardon, I thought I had put them up amongst my lady's things, and, it seems, in my haste, I quite forgot 'em, and left 'em at Canterbury.

Sir John. This is horribly unlucky ? Where do you think you left 'em ?

Rose. Upon the great box in my Lady's chamber ; they are safe enough, I'm sure.

Sir John. It must be so—I must take post immediately : Madam, for some few days I must be absent ; And to confirm you, friend, how much I trust you, I leave the dearest pledge I have on earth, My mistress, to your care.

Mill. If you loved me, you would not take all occasions to leave me thus !

Warn. [*aside.*] Do, go to Kent, and when you come again, here they are ready for you. [*Shows the paper.*

Sir Mart. What's that you have in your hand there, sirrah ?

Warn. [*aside.*] What ill luck was this ! What shall I say ?

Sir Mart. Sometimes you have tongue enough ; what, are you silent ?

Warn. 'Tis an account, sir, of what money you have lost since you came to town.

Sir Mart. I'm very glad on't : now I'll make you all see the severity of my fortune. Give me the paper.

Warn. Heaven ! What does he mean to do ? It is not fairly written out, sir.

Sir John. Besides, I am in haste, another time, sir—

Sir Mart. Pray, oblige me, sir—'tis but one minute : all people love to be pitied in their misfortunes, and so do I. Will you produce it, sirrah ?

Warn. Dear master !

Sir Mart. Dear rascal ! Am I master or you ? You rogue !

Warn. Hold yet, sir, and let me read it. You cannot read my hand.

Sir Mart. This is ever his way, to be disparaging me ; but I'll let you see, sirrah, that I can read your hand better than you yourself can.

Warn. You'll repent it, there's a trick in't, sir——

Sir Mart. Is there so, sirrah ? But I'll bring you out of all your tricks with a vengeance to you—[*Reads*].—How now ! What's this ? A true particular of the estate of Sir John Swallow, Knight, lying and situate in, etc.

Sir John. This is the very paper I had lost—[*Takes the paper*]. I'm very glad on't, it has saved me a most unwelcome journey. But I will not thank you for the courtesy, which now I find you never did intend me—this is confederacy, I smoke it now. Come, madam, let me wait on you to your father.

Mill. Well, of a witty man, this was the foolishhest part that ever I beheld.

[*Exeunt SIR JOHN, MILLICENT, and ROSE.*]

Sir Mart. I am a fool, I must confess it, and I am the most miserable one without thy help—but yet it was such a mistake as any man might have made.

Warn. No doubt on't.

Sir Mart. Prithee chide me ! This indifference of thine wounds me to the heart.

Warn. I care not.

Sir Mart. Wilt thou not help me for this once ?

Warn. Sir, I kiss your hands. I have other business.

Sir Mart. Dear Warner !

Warn. I am inflexible.

Sir Mart. Then I am resolved I'll kill myself.

Warn. You are master of your own body.

Sir Mart. Will you let me damn my soul ?

Warn. At your pleasure, as the devil and you can agree about it.

Sir Mart. D'ye see, the point's ready ? Will you do nothing to save my life ?

Warn. Not in the least.

Sir Mart. Farewell, hard-hearted Warner.

Warn. Adieu, soft-headed Sir Martin.

Sir Mart. Is it possible ?

Warn. Why don't you despatch, sir ? Why all these preambles ?

Sir Mart. I'll see thee hanged first ; I know thou would'st have me killed, to get my clothes.

Warn. I knew it was but a copy of your countenance ; people in this age are not so apt to kill themselves.

Sir Mart. Here are yet ten pieces in my pocket, take 'em, and let's be friends.

Warn. You know the easiness of my nature, and that makes you work upon it so. Well, sir—for this once I cast an eye of pity

on you ; but I must have ten more in hand, before I can stir a foot.

Sir Mart. As I am a true gamester, I have lost all but these ; but if thou'lt lend me them, I'll give 'em thee again.

Warn. I'll rather trust you till to-morrow. Once more look up ; I bid you hope the best.

Why should your folly make your love miscarry,
Since men first play the fools, and then they marry ?

Exeunt.

ACT IV.

Enter SIR MARTIN and WARNER.

Sir Mart. But are they to be married this day, in private, say you ?

Warn. 'Tis so concluded, sir, I dare assure you.

Sir Mart. But why so soon, and in private ?

Warn. So soon, to prevent the designs upon her ; and in private, to save the effusion of Christian money.

Sir Mart. It strikes to my heart already ; in fine, I am a dead man, Warner.

Warn. Well, go your ways ; I'll try what may be done. Look, if he will stir now ? Your rival and the old man will see us together : we are just below the window.

Sir Mart. Thou canst not do't.

Warn. On the peril of my twenty pieces be it.

Sir Mart. But I have found a way to help thee out ; trust to my wit but once.

Warn. Name your wit, or think you have the least grain of wit once more, and I'll lay it down for ever.

Sir Mart. You are a saucy, masterly companion, and so I leave you.

Warn. Help, help, good people ! Murther, murther !

Enter SIR JOHN and MOODY.

Sir John and Moody. How now, what's the matter ?

Warn. I am abused, I am beaten, I am lamed for ever.

Mood. Who has used thee so ?

Warn. The rogue, my master.

Sir John. What was the offence ?

Warn. A trifle—just nothing.

Sir John. That's very strange.

Warn. It was for telling him he lost too much at play ; I meant him nothing but well, Heaven knows, and he, in a cursed humour, would needs revenge his losses upon me. He kicked me, took away my money, and turned me off ; but if I take it at his hands—

Mood. Ay, marry, it was an ill-natured part—nay, I thought no better could come on't, when I heard him at his vow to gads, and in fines.

Warn. But if I live I'll cry quittance with him. He had engaged

me to get Mrs. Millicent your daughter for him ; but if I do not all that ever I can to make her hate him, a great booby, an over-grown oaf, a conceited Bartlemew——

Sir John. Prithree leave off thy choler, and hear me a little. I have had a great mind to thee a long time ; if thou think'st my service better than his, from this minute I entertain thee.

Warn. With all my heart, sir ; and so much the rather, that I may spite him with it. This was the most propitious fate——

Mood. Propitious ! and Fate ! what a scander-bag rogue art thou to talk at this rate ! Hark you, sirrah, one word more of this gibberish, and I'll set you packing from your new service. I'll have neither Propitious nor Fate come within my doors——

Sir John. Nay, pray, father.

Warn. Good old sir, be pacified. I was pouring out a little of the dregs that I had left in me of my former service ; and now they are gone, my stomach's clear of 'em.

Sir John. This fellow is come in a happy hour ; for now, sir, you and I may go to prepare the licence, and in the meantime he may have an eye upon your daughter.

Warn. If you please, I'll wait upon her till she's ready, and then bring her to what church you shall appoint.

Mood. But, friend, you'll find she'll be very loth to come along with you, and therefore I had best stay behind, and bring her myself.

Warn. I warrant you I have a trick for that, sir. She knows nothing of my being turned away ; so I'll come to her as from Sir Martin, and under pretence of carrying her to him, conduct her to you.

Sir John. My better angel——

Mood. By the mess 'twas well thought on ; well, son, go you before, I'll speak but one word for a dish or two at dinner, and follow you to the licence office. Sirrah, stay you here till my return.

[*Exeunt* SIR JOHN and MOODY.]

Warn. [*solus*]. Was there ever such a lucky rogue as I ! I had always a good opinion of my wit, but could never think I had so much as now I find. I have now gained an opportunity to carry away Mistress Millicent for my master ; to get his mistress, by means of his rival, to receive all his happiness, where he could expect nothing but misery : after this exploit, I will have Lilly draw me in the habit of a hero, with a laurel on my temples, and an inscription below it, "This is Warner, the flower of serving-men."

Enter MESSENGER.

Mess. Pray do me the favour to help me to the speech of Mr. Moody.

Warn. What's your business ?

Mess. I have a letter to deliver to him.

Warn. Here he comes, you may deliver it yourself to him.

Re-enter MOODY.

Mess. Sir, a gentleman met me at the corner of the next street, and bid me give this into your own hands.

Mood. Stay, friend, till I have read it.

Mess. He told me, sir, it required no answer. [*Exit MESSENGER.*]

Moody. [*Reads.*] *Sir,—Permit me, though a stranger, to give counsel; some young gallants have had intelligence, that this day you intend privately to marry your daughter, the rich heiress; and in fine, about twenty of 'em have dispersed themselves to watch her going out; therefore put it off, if you will avoid mischief, and be advised by*

YOUR UNKNOWN SERVANT.

Mood. By the Mackings, I thought there was no good in't when I saw in fine there; there are some papishes, I'll warrant, that lie in wait for my daughter, or else they are no Englishmen, but some of your French Outalian rogues; I owe him thanks, however, this unknown friend of mine, that told me on't. Warner, no wedding to-day, Warner.

Warn. Why, what's the matter, sir?

Mood. I say no more, but some wiser than some, I'll keep my daughter at home this afternoon, and a fig for all these Outalians.

[*Exit MOODY.*]

Warn. So, here's another trick of fortune, as unexpected for bad, as the other was for good. Nothing vexes me, but that I had made my game cock-sure, and then to be backgammoned: it must needs be a mischievous imp that wrote this letter; he owed my master a spite, and has paid him to the purpose; and here he comes as merry too, he little thinks what misfortune has befallen him; and for my part I am ashamed to tell him.

Enter SIR MARTIN, laughing.

Sir Mart. Warner, such a jest, Warner. [*Laughs again.*]

Warn. What a murrain is the matter, sir? Where lies this jest that tickles you?

Sir Mart. Let me laugh out my laugh, and I'll tell thee.

[*Laughs again.*]

Warn. I wish you may have cause for all this mirth.

Sir Mart. Hereafter, Warner, be it known unto thee, I will endure no more to be made thy May-game. Thou shalt no more dare to tell me I spoilt thy projects, and discover thy designs; for I have played such a prize, without thy help, of my own mother-wit, 'tis true, I am hasty sometimes, and so do harm; but when I have a mind to show myself, there's no man in England, though I say it, comes near me, as to point of imagination, I'll make thee acknowledge I have laid a plot that has a soul in't.

Warn. Pray, sir, keep me no longer in ignorance of this rare invention.

Sir Mart. Know then, Warner, that when I left thee, I was possessed with a terrible fear, that my mistress should be married. Well, thought I to myself, and, mustering up all the forces of my wit, I did produce such a statagem.

Warn. But what was it?

C

Sir Mart. I feigned a letter, as from an unknown friend, to Moody, wherein I gave him to understand, that if his daughter went out this afternoon, she would infallibly be snapt by some young fellows that lay in wait for her.

Warn. Very good.

Sir Mart. That which follows is yet better ; for he I sent assures me, that in that very nick of time my letter came her father was just sending her abroad with a very foolish rascally fellow that was with him.

Warn. And did you perform all this ? Could you do this wonderful miracle, without your soul to the devil for his help ?

Sir Mart. I tell thee, man, I did it, and it was done by the help of no devil, but this familiar of my one brain ; how long would it have been, e'er thou could'st have thought of such a project ? Martin said to his man, Who's the fool now ?

Warn. Who's the fool ? Why, who used to be the fool ? he that ever was, since I knew him, and will ever be so !

Sir Mart. What a plague ! I think thou art grown envious ; not one word in my commendations ?

Warn. Faith, sir, my skill is too little to praise you as you deserve ; but if you would have it according to my poor ability, you're one that had a knock in your cradle, a conceited lack-wit, a designing ass, a hair-brained fop, a confounded busy-brain, with an eternal windmill in it ; this, in short, sir, is the contents of your panegyric.

Sir Mart. But what have I done to set you thus against me ?

Warn. Only this, sir, I was the foolish rascally fellow that was with Moody, and your worship was he to whom I was to bring his daughter.

Sir Mart. But how could I know this ? I am no witch.

Warn. No, I'll be sworn for you, you are no conjurer. Will you go, sir ?

Sir Mart. Will you hear my justifications ?

Warn. Shall I see the back of you ? Speak not a word in your defence. [Shoves him.]

Sir Mart. This is the strangest luck now——

[Exit.]

Warn. I'm resolved this devil of his shall never weary me, I will overcome him, I will invent something that shall stand good, in spite of his folly. Let me see——

Enter LORD.

Lord. Here he is—I must venture on him, for the tyranny of this old lady is unsupportable, since I have made her my confidant there passes not an hour but she passes a pull at my purse strings ; I shall be ruined if I do not quit myself of her suddenly. I find now, by sad experience, that a mistress is much more chargeable than a wife, and after a little time, too, grows full as dull and insignificant. Mr. Warner, have you a mind to do yourself a courtesy and me another ?

Warn. I think, my Lord, the question need not be much disputed,

for I have always had a great service for your Lordship, and some little kindness for myself.

Lord. What if you should propose Mrs. Christian as a wife to your master? You know he's never like to compass t'other.

Warn. I cannot tell that, my Lord——

Lord. £500 are yours at the day of marriage.

Warn. £500 'tis true, the temptation is very sweet and powerful, and many a good murther and treason have been committed at a cheaper rate; but yet——

Lord. What yet——

Warn. To confess the truth, I am resolved to bestow my master upon that other lady (as difficult as your Lordship thinks it), for the honour of my wit is engaged in it. Will it not be the same to your Lordship, were she married to any other?

Lord. The very same.

Warn. Come, my Lord, not to dissemble with you any longer, I know where it is that your shoe wrings you; I have observed something in the house betwixt some parties that shall be nameless.

Lord. I see I have not danced in a net before you.

Warn. As for that old lady, she is the greatest jilt in nature; cheat is her study, all her joy to cozen; she loves nothing but herself, and draws all lines to that corrupted centre.

Lord. I have found her out, though late.

Warn. Well, my Lord, cheer up! I have found a way to rid you of it all, within a short time you shall know more; yonder appears a young lady, whom I must needs speak with; please you go in and prepare the old lady and your mistress.

Lord. Good luck, and £500 attend thee.

[Exit.

Enter MILLICENT and ROSE above.

Mill. I am resolved I'll never marry him!

Rose. So far you are right, madam.

Mill. But how to hinder it I cannot possibly tell! For my father presses me to it, and will take no denial. Would I knew some way——

Warn. Madam, I'll teach you the very nearest, for I have just now found it out.

Rose. Are you there, Mr. Littleplot?

Warn. Studying to deserve thee, Rose, by my diligence for thy Lady. I stand here, methinks, just like a wooden Mercury, to point her out the way to matrimony. In the first place, then, I must acquaint you, that I have seemingly put off my master, and entered myself into Sir John's service.

Mill. Most excellent!

Warn. And thereupon, but base——

Enter MOODY.

Mill. Something he would tell us, but see what luck's here!

Mood. How now, sirrah? are you so great there already?

Mill. I find my father's jealous of him still !

Warn. Sir, I was only teaching my young lady a new song, and
if you please you shall hear it. [Sings.

Make ready, fair lady, to night,
And stand at the door below,
For I will be there
To receive you with care,
And to your true love you shall go.

Mood. Ods bobs, this is very pretty.

Mill. Ay, so is the lady's answer, too, if I could but hit on't.

[Sings.

And when the stars twinkle so bright,
Then down to the door will I creep,
To my love will I fly,
Ere the jealous can spy,
And leave my old daddy asleep.

Mood. Bodikins, I like not that so well, to cozen her old father ;
it may be my own case another time.

Rose. Oh, madam ! yonder's your persecutor returned.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Mill. I'll into my chamber, to avoid the sight of him as long as
I can. Lord ! that my old doting father should throw me away
upon such an ignoramus, and deny me to such a wit as Sir Martin.
[*Exeunt MILLICENT and ROSE from above.*

Mood. O son ! here has been the most villainous tragedy against
you.

Sir John. What tragedy ? Has there been any blood shed since I
went ?

Mood. No blood shed ; but, as I told you, a most horrible
tragedy.

Warn. A tragedy ! I'll be hanged if he does not mean a stra-
tagem.

Mood. Jack Sauce ? if I say it is a tragedy, it shall be a tragedy,
in spite of you ; teach your grandam how——. What—I hope I am
old enough to spout English with you, sir ?

Sir John. But what was the reason you came not after me ?

Mood. 'Twas well I did not, I'll promise you, there were those
would have made bold with Mrs. Bride ; and if she had stirred out
of doors, there were whipsters abroad, i'faith, that would have
picked the lock of her affections ere a man could have said, what's
this ? But, by good luck, I had warning of it by a friend's letter.

Sir John. The remedy for all such dangers is easy ; you may
send for a parson and have the business dispatched at home.

Mood. A match, i'faith ! do you provide a domine, and I'll go tell
her our resolutions, and hearten her up against the day of battle.

[Exit.

Sir John. Now I think on't, this letter must needs come from Sir
Martin ; a plot of his, upon my life, to hinder our marriage.

Warn. I see, sir, you'll still mistake him for a wit ; but I am much deceived if that letter came not from another hand.

Sir John. From whom, I prithee ?

Warn. Nay, for that you shall excuse me, sir ; I do not love to make a breach betwixt persons that are to be so near related.

Sir John. Thou seem'st to imply that my mistress was in the plot.

Warn. Can you make a doubt on't. Do you not know she ever loved him ? and can you hope she has so soon forsaken him ? You may make yourself miserable, if you please, by such a marriage.

Sir John. When she is once mine, her virtue will secure me.

Warn. Her virtue !

Sir John. What, do you make a mock on't ?

Warn. Not I, I assure you, sir, I think it no such jesting matter.

Sir John. Why, is she not honest ?

Warn. Yes, in my conscience is she, for Sir Martin's tongue's no slander.

Sir John. But does he say to the contrary ?

Warn. If one would believe him, which, for my part, I do not, he has, in a manner, confessed it to me.

Sir John. Ha !

Warn. Courage, sir, never vex yourself ; I'll warrant you 'tis all a lie.

Sir John. But how shall I be 'sured 'tis so ?

Warn. When you are married.

Sir John. I do not love to make that experiment at my own cost.

Warn. Then you must never marry.

Sir John. All manner of ways I am most miserable.

Warn. The truth is, an honest simple girl that's ignorant of all things maketh the best matrimony ; there is such a pleasure in instructing her ; the best is, there's not one dunce in all the sex ; such a one with a good fortune——

Sir John. Ay, but where is she, Warner ?

Warn. Near enough, but that you are too far engaged.

Sir John. Engaged to one that hath already deceived me ?

Warn. What think you then of Mrs. Christian here in the house ? There's £5,000, and a better penny.

Sir John. Ay, but is she fool enough ?

Warn. She's none of the wise virgins, I can assure you.

Sir John. Dear Warner, step into the next room and inveigle her out this way, that I may speak to her.

Warn. Remember, above all things, you keep this wooing secret. If he takes the least wind, old Moody will be sure to hinder it.

Sir John. Dost thou think I shall get her aunt's consent ?

Warn. Leave that to me.

[Exit WARNER.]

Sir John. How happy a man shall I be if I can but compass this !—and what a precipice have I avoided ! Then the revenge, too, is sweet. Well, such a servant as this Warner is a jewel.

Enter WARNER and MRS. CHRISTIAN to him.

Warn. There she is, sir ; now I'll go to prepare her aunt.

Sir John. Sweet mistress, I am come to wait upon you.

Chr. Truly you are too good to wait on me.

Sir John. And in the condition of a suitor.

Chr. As how, forsooth ?

Sir John. To be so happy as to marry you.

Chr. O Lord ! I would not marry for anything !

Sir John. Why ? 'tis the honest end of womankind.

Chr. Twenty years hence, forsooth.

Sir John. Pah !—What an innocent girl it is, and very child !
Lord ! her innocency makes me laugh ; my cheeks all wet.—
Sweet lady—

[*Aside.*]

Chr. I'm but a gentlewoman, forsooth.

Sir John. Well then, sweet mistress, if I get your friends' consent, shall I have yours ?

Chr. My old lady may do what she will, forsooth, but by my truly, I hope she will have more care of me than to marry me yet ; Lord bless me, what should I do with a husband ?

Sir John. Well, sweetheart, then instead of wooing you, I must woo my old lady.

Chr. Indeed, gentleman, my old lady is married already. Cry you mercy, forsooth, I think you are a knight.

Sir John. Happy in that title only to make you Lady.

Chr. Believe me, Mr. Knight, I would not be a Lady ; it makes folks proud, and so humorous, and so ill housewives, forsooth.

Sir John. Pah,—she's a baby, the simplest thing that ever yet I knew, the happiest man I shall be in the world.

Enter LADY DUPE.

Lady Dupe. By your leave, sir : I hope this noble knight will make you happy, and you make him.

Chr. What shall I make him ?

[*Sighing.*]

Lady Dupe. Marry, you shall make him happy in a good wife.

Chr. I will not marry, madam.

Lady Dupe. You fool !

Sir John. Pray, madam, let me speak with you ; on my soul 'tis the prettiest, innocentest thing in the world.

Lady Dupe. Indeed, sir, she knows little besides her work, and her prayers ; but I'll talk with the fool.

Sir John. Deal gently with her, dear madam.

Lady Dupe. Come, Christian, will not you marry this noble knight ?

Chr. Yes, yes, yes—

[*Sobbingly.*]

Lady Dupe. Sir, it shall be to-night.

Sir John. This innocence is a dowry beyond all price.

Exeunt OLD LADY and MRS. CHRISTIAN.

Enter SIR MARTIN and SIR JOHN, musing.

Sir Mart. You are very melancholy, methinks, sir.

Sir John. You are mistaken, sir.

Sir Mart. You may dissemble as you please, but Mrs. Millicent lies at the bottom of your heart.

Sir John. My heart, I assure you, has no room for so poor a trifle.

Sir Mart. Sure you think to wheedle me ; would you have me imagine you do not love her ?

Sir John. Love her ! Why should you think me such a sot ? Love an infamous person !

Sir Mart. Fair and soft, good Sir John.

Sir John. You see I am no very obstinate rival—I leave the field free to you : go on, sir, and pursue your good fortune, and be as happy as such a creature can make thee.

Sir Mart. This is Hebrew-Greek to me ; but I must tell you, sir, I will not suffer my divinity to be profaned by such a tongue as yours.

Sir John. Believe it, whate'er I say, I can quote my author for.

Sir Mart. Then, sir, whoever told it you, lied in his throat, d'ye see, and deeper than that, d'ye see, in his stomach, d'ye see ?

Sir John. What if Warner told me so ? I hope you'll grant him to be a competent judge in such a business.

Sir Mart. Did that precious rascal say it ? Now I think on't, I'll not believe you : in fine, sir, I'll hold you an even wager he denies it.

Sir John. I'll lay you ten to one, he justifies it to your face.

Sir Mart. I'll make him give up the ghost under my fist, if he does not deny it.

Sir John. I'll cut off his ears upon the spot, if he does not stand to it.

Enter WARNER.

Sir Mart. Here he comes in pudding-time to resolve the question. Come hither, you lying varlet, hold up your hand at the bar of justice, and answer me to what I shall demand.

Warn. What a goodyear is the matter, sir ?

Sir Mart. Thou spawn of the old serpent, fruitful in nothing but in lies !

Warn. A very fair beginning this.

Sir Mart. Didst thou dare to cast thy venom upon such a saint as Mrs. Millicent—to traduce her virtue ?

Warn. Not guilty, my Lord.

Sir Mart. I told you so.

Sir John. How, Mr. Rascal ! Have you forgot what you said but now concerning Sir Martin and Mrs. Millicent ? I'll stop the lie down your throat, if you dare deny it.

Sir Mart. Say you so ! Are you there again i'faith ?

Warn. Pray pacify yourself, sir, 'twas a plot of my own devising.

Sir Mart. Leave off your winking and your pinking, with a horse-plague to ye, I'll understand none of it; tell me in plain English the truth of the business; for an' you were my own brother, you should pay for it: belie my mistress! What a plague, d'ye think I have no sense of honour?

Warn. What's the matter with ye? Either be at quiet, or I'll resolve to take my heels, and begone.

Sir Mart. Stop thief there! What, did you think to escape the hand of justice?—[*Lays hold on him.*]—The best on't is, sirrah, your heels are not altogether so nimble as your tongue.

[*Beats him.*]

Warn. Help! Murther! Murther!

Sir Mart. Confess, you rogue, then.

Warn. Hold your hands, I think the devil's in you,—I tell you, 'tis a device of mine.

Sir Mart. And have you no body to devise it on but my mistress, the very map of innocence?

Sir John. Moderate your anger, good Sir Martin.

Sir Mart. By your patience, sir, I'll chastise him abundantly.

Sir John. That's a little too much, sir, by your favour, to beat him in my presence.

Sir Mart. That's a good one i'faith; your presence shall hinder me from beating my own servant?

Warn. O traitor to all sense and reason! he's going to discover that too.

Sir Mart. An' I had a mind to beat him to mummy, he's my own, I hope.

Sir John. At present, I must tell you, he's mine, sir.

Sir Mart. Heyday! here's fine juggling!

Warn. Stop yet, sir, you are just upon the brink of a precipice.

Sir Mart. What is't thou meanest now?—ah, Lord! my mind misgives me, I have done some fault, but would I were hanged if I can find it out.

[*Aside.*]

Warn. There's no making him understand me.

Sir Mart. Plague on't, come what will, I'll not be faced down with a lie; I say he is my man.

Sir John. Pray remember yourself better; did not you turn him away for some fault lately, and laid a livery of black and blue on his back before he went?

Sir Mart. Nothing of any fault, or any black and blue that I remember: either the rascal put some trick upon you, or you would upon me.

Sir John. O, oh, then it seems the cudgelling and turning away were pure invention; I am glad I understand it.

Sir Mart. In fine, it's all so wretched a lie—

Warn. Alas! he has forgot it, sir: good wits, you know, have bad memories.

Sir John. No, no, sir, that shall not serve your turn, you may return when you please to your old master, I give you a fair dis-

charge, and a glad man I am to be so rid of you : were you thereabouts i'faith? What a snake I had entertained into my bosom ! Fare you well, sir, and lay your next plot better between you, I advise you. *[Exit SIR JOHN.]*

Warn. Lord, sir, how you stand ! as you were nipped i'the head ; have you done any new piece of folly, that makes you look so like an ass ?

Sir Mart. Here's three pieces of gold yet, if I had the heart to offer it thee. *[Holds the gold afar off, trembling.]*

Warn. Noble sir, what have I done to deserve so great a liberality ? I confess if you had beaten me for my own fault, if you had utterly destroyed all my projects, then it might have been expected that ten or twenty pieces should have been offered by way of recompense or satisfaction.

Sir Mart. Nay, an' you be so full of your flouts, your friend and servant ; who could tell the meaning of your signs and tokens, and you go to that ?

Warn. You are no ass then ?

Sir Mart. Well, sir, to do you service, d'ye see, I am an ass in a fair way ; will that satisfy you ?

Warn. For this once ; produce those three pieces, I am contented to receive that inconsiderable tribute ; or make 'em six, and I'll take the fault upon myself.

Sir Mart. Are we friends then ? If we are, let me advise you——

Warn. Yet advising——

Sir Mart. For no harm, good Warner. But pray next time make me of your counsel, let me enter into the business, instruct me in every point, and then if I discover all, I am resolved to give over affairs, and retire from the world.

Warn. Agreed, it shall be so ; but let us now take breath awhile, then on again.

For though we had the worst, those heats were past,
We'll whip and spur, and fetch him up at last.

[Exeunt.]

ACT V.

Enter LORD, LADY DUPE, MRS. CHRISTIAN, ROSE and WARNER.

Lord. Your promise is admirably made good to me, that Sir John Swallow should be this night married to Mrs. Christian ; instead of that, he is more deeply engaged than ever with old Moody.

Warn. I cannot help these ebbs and flows of fortune.

Lady Dupe. I am sure my niece suffers most in't ; he's come off to her with a cold compliment of a mistake which he has now found out, by your master's folly, to be a plot of yours to separate them.

Chr. To be forsaken when a woman has given her consent !

Lord. 'Tis the same scorn, as to have a town rendered up, and afterwards slighted.

Rose. You are a sweet youth, sir, to use my lady so, when she de-

pended on you ! Is this the faith of a valet de chambre ? I would be ashamed to be such a dishonour to my profession ; it will reflect upon us in time, we shall be ruined by your good example.

Warn. As how, my dear Lady Ambassadors ?

Rose. Why, they say the women govern their ladies, and you govern us ; so if you play fast and loose, not a gallant will bribe us for our good wills ; the gentle guinea will now go to the ordinary, which used as duly to steal into our hands at the stair-foot, as into Mr. Doctor's at parting.

Lord. Night's come, and I expect your promise.

Lady Dupe. Fail with me if you think good, sir.

Chr. I give no more time.

Rose. And if my mistress—

Warn. Heyday ! you are dealing with me as they do with the bankers, call in all your debts together ; there's no possibility of payment at this rate, but I'll coin for you all as fast as I can, I assure you.

Lady Dupe. But you must not think to pay us with false money, as you have done hitherto.

Rose. Leave off your mountebank tricks with us, and fall to your business in good earnest.

Warn. Faith, and I will, Rose ; for, to confess the truth, I am a kind of a mountebank. I have but one cure for all your diseases, that is, that my master may marry Mrs. Millicent, for then Sir John Swallow will of himself return to Mrs. Christian.

Lord. He says true, and therefore we must all be helping to that design.

Warn. I'll put you upon something ; give me but a thinking time. In the first place, get a warrant and bailiffs to arrest Sir John Swallow, upon a promise of marriage to Mrs. Christian.

Lord. Very good.

Lady Dupe. We'll all swear it.

Warn. I never doubted your Ladyship in the least, madam ;—for the rest we will consider hereafter.

Lord. Leave this to us.

[and MRS. CHRISTIAN.

[*Exeunt* LORD, LADY DUPE, MILLICENT,

Warn. Rose, where's thy lady ?

Mill. What have you to say to her ?

Warn. Only to tell you, madam, I am going forward in the great work of projection.

Mill. I know not whether you will deserve my thanks when the work's done.

Warn. Madam, I hope you are not become indifferent to my master.

Mill. If he should prove a fool after all your crying up his wit, I shall be a miserable woman.

Warn. A fool ! that were a good jest if faith ; but how comes your Ladyship to suspect it ?

Rose. I have heard, madam, your greatest wits have ever a touch of madness and extravagance in them, so, perhaps, has he.

Warn. There's nothing more distant than wit and folly, yet, like east and west, they may meet in a point, and produce actions that are but a hair's-breadth from one another.

Rose. I'll undertake he has wit enough to make one laugh at him a whole day together; he's a most comical person.

Mill. For all this, I will not swear he is no fool; he has still discovered all your plots.

Warn. O madam, that's the common fate of your Machivellians, they draw their designs so subtle, that their very fineness breaks them.

Mill. However, I'm resolved to be on the sure side; I will have certain proof of his wit before I marry him.

Warn. Madam, I'll give you one. He wears his clothes like a great sloven, and that's a sure sign of wit; he neglects his outward parts; besides, he speaks French, sings, dances, plays upon the lute.

Mill. Does he do all this, say you?

Warn. Most divinely, madam.

Mill. I ask no more; then let him give me a serenade immediately; but let him stand in the view, I'll not be cheated.

Warn. He shall do't, madam; but how?—for he sings like a screech owl, and never touched the lute. [Aside.

Mill. You'll see it performed?

Warn. Now I think on't, madam, this will but retard our enterprise.

Mill. Either let him do't, or see me no more.

Warn. Well, it shall be done, madam; but where's your father? Will not he overhear it?

Mill. As good hap is, he's below stairs, talking with a seaman that has brought him news from the East Indies.

Warn. What concernment can he have there?

Mill. He had a bastard son there whom he loved extremely; but not having any news from him these many years, concluded him dead; this son he expects within these three days.

Warn. When did he see him last?

Mill. Not since he was seven years old.

Warn. A sudden thought comes into my head, to make him appear before his time; let my master pass for him, and by that means he may come into the house unsuspected by your father or his rival.

Mill. According as he performs his serenade, I'll talk with you—make haste!—I must retire a little.

[Exit MILLICENT, from above.

Rose. I'll instruct him most rarely, he shall never be found out; but, in the meantime, what wilt thou do with a serenade?

Warn. Faith, I am a little nonplussed on the sudden, but a warm consolation from thy lips, Rose, would set my wits a working again.

Rose. Adieu, Warner.

[Exit ROSE.

Warn. Inhuman Rose, adieu. Blockhead Warner, into what a præmunire hast thou brought thyself! this 'tis to be so forward to promise for another—but to be godfather to a fool, to promise and vow he should do anything like a Christian——

Enter SIR MARTIN.

Sir Mart. Why, how now, bully, in a brown study? for my good, I warrant it; there's five shillings for thee—what, we must encourage good wits sometimes.

Warn. Hang your white pelf: sure, sir, by your largess you mistake me for Martin Parker, the ballad maker; your covetousness has offended my muse, and quite dulled her.

Sir Mart. How angry the poor devil is! in fine, thou art as choleric as a cook by a fireside.

Warn. I am over-heated, like a gun, with continual discharging my wit: 'slife, sir, I have rarefied my brains for you, till they are evaporated; but come, sir, do something for yourself like a man. I have engaged you shall give to your mistress a serenade, in your proper person: I'll borrow a lute for you.

Sir Mart. I'll warrant thee I'll do't, man.

Warn. You never learned; I don't think you know one stop.

Sir Mart. 'Tis no matter for that, sir; I'll play as fast as I can, and never stop at all.

Warn. Go to, you are an invincible fool, I see! get up into your window, and set two candles by you, take my landlord's lute in your hand, and fumble on't, and make grimaces with your mouth, as if you sung; in the meantime, I'll play in the next room in the dark, and consequently your mistress, who will come to her balcony over against you, will think it to be you; and at the end of every tune, I'll ring the bell that hangs between your chamber and mine, that you may know when to have done.

Sir Mart. Why, this is fair play now, to tell a man beforehand what he must do; gramercy, ifaith, boy, now if I fail thee——

Warn. About your business then, your mistress and her maid appear already: I'll give you the sign with the bell, when I am prepared, for my lute is at hand in the barber's shop. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter MILLICENT and ROSE, with a candle by them above.

Rose. We shall have rare music.

Mill. I wish it prove so; for I suspect the knight can neither play nor sing.

Rose. But if he does, you're bound to pay the music, madam.

Mill. I'll not believe it, except both my ears and eyes are witnesses.

Rose. But 'tis night, madam, and you cannot see 'em; yet he may play admirably in the dark.

Mill. Where's my father?

Rose. You need not fear him, he's still employed with that same seaman, and I have set Mrs. Christian to watch their discourse,

that betwixt her and me Warner may have wherewithal to instruct his master.

Mill. But yet there's fear my father will find out the plot.

Rose. Not in the least, for my old lady has provided two rare disguises for the master and the man.

Mill. Peace, I hear them beginning to tune the lute.

Rose. And see, madam, where your true knight, Sir Martin, is placed yonder, like Apollo, with his lute in his hand, and his rays about his head.

[SIR MARTIN appears at the adverse window, a tune played; when it is done, WARNER rings, and SIR MARTIN holds.

Did he not play most excellently, madam?

Mill. He played well; and yet methinks he held his lute but untowardly.

Rose. Dear madam, peace; now for the song.

THE SONG.

Blind love, to this hour,
Had never like me, a slave under his power.
Then blest be the dart
That he threw at my heart,
For nothing can prove
A joy so great as to be wounded with love.
My days and my nights
Are filled to the purpose with sorrows and frights;
From my heart still I sigh,
And my eyes are ne'er dry,
So that Cupid be praised,
I am to the top of love's happiness raised.
My soul's all on fire,
So that I have the pleasure to dote and desire,
Such a pretty soft pain,
That it tickles each vein,
'Tis the dream of a smart,
Which makes me breathe short when it beats at my heart
Sometimes in a pet,
When I am despised, I my freedom would get;
But straight a sweet smile,
Does my anger beguile,
And my heart does recall,
Then the more I do struggle, the lower I fall.
Heaven does not impart
Such a grace, as to love, unto every one's heart;
For many may wish
To be wounded, and miss:
Then blest be love's fire,
And more blest her eyes that first taught me desire.

[The song being done, WARNER rings again; but SIR MARTIN continues fumbling, and gazing on his mistress.

Mill. A pretty humoured song—but stay, methinks he plays and

sings still, and yet we cannot hear him. Play louder, Sir Martin, that we may have the fruits on't.

Warn. [*peeping.*] Death, this abominable fool will spoil all again. Confound him, he stands making his grimaces yonder, and he looks so earnestly upon his mistress, that he hears me not. [*Rings again.*]

Mill. Ah, ah! have I found you out, sir? Now, as I live and breathe, this is pleasant, Rose—his man played and sung for him, and he, it seems, did not know when he should give over.

[*MILLICENT and ROSE laugh.*]

Warn. They have found him out, and laugh yonder, as if they would split their sides. Why, Mr. Fool, oaf, coxcomb, will you hear none of your names?

Mill. Sir Martin, Sir Martin, take your man's counsel, and keep time with your music.

Sir Mart. [*peeping.*] Ha! what do you say, madam? How does your Ladyship like my music?

Mill. O most heavenly! just like the harmony of the spheres, that is to be admired, and never heard.

Warn. You have ruined all by your not leaving off in time.

Sir Mart. But what would you have a man do, when my hand is in? Well, on my conscience, I think there is a fate upon me.

[*Noise within.*]

Mill. Look, Rose, what's the matter?

Rose. 'Tis Sir John Swallow, pursued by the bailiffs, madam, according to our plot; it seems they have dogged him thus late to his lodging.

Mill. That's well! for though I begin not to love this fool, yet I am glad I shall be rid on him. [*Excunt MILLICENT and ROSE.*]

Enter SIR JOHN, pursued by three bailiffs over the stage.

Sir Mart. Now I'll redeem all again, my mistress shall see my valour, I'm resolved on't; villains, rogues, poltroons! what, three upon one? *in fine*, I'll be with you immediately. [*Exit.*]

Warn. Why, sir, are you stark mad? have you no grain of sense left? he's gone! now is he as earnest in the quarrel as cokes among the puppets; 'tis to no purpose whatever I do for him,

[*Exit WARNER.*]

Re-enter SIR JOHN and SIR MARTIN (having driven away the bailiffs), SIR MARTIN flourishes his sword.

Sir Mart. Victoria, Victoria! what heart, Sir John, you have received no harm, I hope?

Sir John. Not the least; I thank you, sir, for your timely assistance, which I will requite with anything but the resigning of my mistress.—Dear Sir Martin, a good night.

Sir Mart. Pray let me wait upon you in, Sir John.

Sir John. I can find my way to Mrs. Millicent without you, sir,—I thank you.

Sir Mart. But pray, what were you to be arrested for?

Sir John. I know no more than you, some little debts, perhaps, I left unpaid by my negligence ; once more, good night, sir. [*Exit.*]

Sir Mart. He's an ungrateful fellow ; and so, in fine, I shall tell him, when I see him next.—Monsieur——

Enter WARNER.

Warner, *à propos* ! I hope you'll applaud me now, I have defeated the enemy, and that in sight of my mistress ; boy, I have charmed her, i'faith, with my valour.

Warn. Ay, just as much as you did even now with your music ; go, you are so beastly a fool, that a chiding is thrown away upon you.

Sir Mart. Fool, in your face, sir ? call a man of honour fool, when I have just achieved such an enterprise.—Gad, now my blood's up, I am a dangerous person, I can tell you that, Warner.

Warn. Poor animal, I pity thee.

Sir Mart. I grant I am no musician, but you must allow me for a swordsman. I have beat 'em bravely ; and, in fine, I am come off unhurt, save only a little scratch i'th' head.

Warn. That's impossible ; thou hast a skull so thick no sword can pierce it ; but much good may't d'ye. Sir, with the fruits of your valour you rescued your rival when he was to be arrested, on purpose to take him off from your mistress.

Sir Mart. Why, this is ever the fate of ingenious men ; nothing thrives they take in hand. [*Enter ROSE.*]

Rose. Sir Martin, you have done your business with my lady ; she'll never look upon you more. She says, she's so well satisfied of your wit and courage, that she will not put you to any further trial.

Sir Mart. Warner, is there no hope, Warner ?

Warn. None that I know.

Sir Mart. Let's have but one civil plot more before we part.

Warn. 'Tis to no purpose.

Rose. Yet if he had some golden friends that would engage for him the next time——

Sir Mart. Here's a Jacobus and a Carolus will enter into bonds for me.

Rose. I'll take their royal words for once.

[*She fetches two disguises.*]

Warn. The meaning of this, dear Rose ?

Rose. 'Tis in pursuance of thy own invention, Warner, a child of thy wit. But let us lose no time. Help, help ! Dress thy master, that he may be Anthony, old Moody's bastard, and thou his, come from the East Indies.

Sir Mart. Hey-tarock-it——now we shall have Rose's device too. I long to be at it. Pray let's hear more on't.

Rose. Old Moody, you must know, in his younger years, when he was a Cambridge scholar, had a bastard, whose name was Anthony, whom you, Sir Martin, are to represent.

Sir Mart. I warrant you, let me alone for Tony. But pray go on, Rose.

Rose. This child, in his father's time, he durst not own, but bred him privately in the Isle of Ely, till he was seven years old, and from thence sent him with one Bonaventure, a merchant, for the East Indies.

Warn. But will not this overburden your memory, sir?

Sir Mart. There's no answering thee anything; thou think'st I am good for nothing.

Rose. Bonaventure died at Surat, within two years, and this Anthony has lived up and down in the Mogul's country, unheard of by his father till this night, and is expected within these three days. Now, if you can pass for him, you may have admittance into the house, and make an end of all the business before the other Anthony arrives.

Warn. But hold, Rose, there's one considerable point omitted; what was his mother's name?

Rose. That indeed I had forgot: her name was Dorothy, daughter to one Drawwater, a vintner at the "Rose."

Warn. Come, sir, are you perfect in your lesson? Anthony Moody, born in Cambridge, bred in the Isle of Ely, sent into the Mogul's country at seven years old, with one Bonaventure a merchant, who died within two years; your mother's name Dorothy Drawwater, the vintner's daughter at the "Rose."

Sir Mart. I have it all *ad unguem*. What dost think I'm a sot? But stay a little: how have I lived all this while in that same country?

Warn. What country? Plague, he has forgot already—

Rose. The Mogul's country.

Sir Mart. Aye, aye, the Mogul's country! What! any man may mistake a little, but now I have it perfect; but what have I been doing all this while in the Mogul's country? he's a heathen rogue, I am afraid I shall never hit upon his name.

Warn. Why, you have been passing your time there, no matter how.

Rose. Well, if this passes upon the old man, I'll bring your business about again with my mistress, never fear it; stay you here at the door. I'll go tell the old man of your arrival.

Warn. Well, sir, now play your part exactly, and I'll forgive all your former errors—

Sir Mart. Hang 'em, they were only slips of youth. How peremptory and domineering this rogue is, now he sees I have need of his service! Would I were out of his power again, I would make him lie at my feet like any spaniel.

Enter MOODY, SIR JOHN, LADY DUPE, MILLICENT, MRS CHRISTIAN, and ROSE.

Mood. Is he here already, say'st thou? which is he?

Rose. That sun-burn'd gentleman.

Mood. My dear boy Anthony, do I see thee again before I die? Welcome, welcome!

Sir Mart. My dear father, I know it is you by instinct, for methinks I am as like you as if I were spit out of your mouth.

Rose. Keep it up, I beseech your Lordship. [*Aside to the LORD.*]

Lord. He's wondrous like indeed.

Lady Dupe. The very image of him.

Mood. Anthony, you must salute all this company : this is my Lord Dartmouth, this is my Lady Dupe, this her niece Mrs. Christian. [*He salutes them.*]

Sir Mart. And that's my sister ; methinks I have a good resemblance of her too : honest sister, I must needs kiss you, sister.

Warn. This fool will discover himself, I foresee it already, by his carriage to her.

Mood. And now, Anthony, pray tell us a little of your travels.

Sir Mart. Time enough for that, forsooth, father, but I have such a natural affection for my sister, that methinks I could live and die with her : give me thy hand, sweet sister.

Sir John. She's beholding to you, sir.

Sir Mart. What if she be, sir ? What's that to you, sir ?

Sir John. I hope, sir, I have not offended you.

Sir Mart. It may be you have, and it may be you have not, sir ; you see I have no mind to satisfy you, sir : what a plague ! a man cannot talk a little to his own flesh and blood, but you must be interposing, with a murrian to you.

Mood. Enough of this, good Anthony ; this gentleman is to marry your sister.

Sir Mart. He marry my sister ! Ods foot, sir, there are some, that shall be nameless, that are as well worthy to marry her as any man, and have as good blood in their veins.

Sir John. I do not question it in the least, sir.

Sir Mart. 'Tis not your best course, sir ; you marry my sister ! what have you seen of the world, sir ? I have seen your hurricanoes, and your calentures, and your ecliptics, and your tropic lines, sir, an' you go to that, sir.

Warn. You must excuse my master, the sea's a little working in his brain, sir.

Sir Mart. And your Prester Johns o' the East Indies, and your great Turk of Rome and Persia.

Mood. Lord, what a thing it is to be learned, and a traveller ! Bodikins, it makes me weep for joy ; but, Anthony, you must not bear yourself too much upon your learning, child.

Mill. Pray, brother, be civil to this gentleman, for my sake.

Sir Mart. For your sake, sister Millicent, much may be done, and here I kiss your hand on't.

Warn. Yet again, stupidity ?

Mill. Nay, pray, brother, hands off, now you are too rude——

Sir Mart. Dear sister, as I am a true East India gentleman——

Mood. But pray, son Anthony, let's talk of other matters, and tell me truly, had you not quite forgot me ? and yet I made woundy much of you when you were young.

Sir Mart. I remember you as well as if I saw you but yesterday—a fine grey-headed, grey-bearded old gentleman as ever I saw in all my life.

Warn. [*aside.*] Grey-bearded old gentleman, when he was a scholar at Cambridge.

Mood. But do you remember where you were bred up?

Sir Mart. Oh yes, sir, most perfectly; in the Isle—stay—let me see; oh, now I have it! in the Isle of Scilly.

Mood. In the Isle of Ely, sure, you mean?

Warn. Without doubt he did, sir; but this Isle of Scilly runs in his head ever since his sea voyage.

Mood. And your mother's name was—come, pray let me examine you—for that I'm sure you cannot forget.

Sir Mart. Warner! What was it, Warner?

Warn. Poor Mrs. Dorothy Drawwater, if she were now alive what a joyful day would this be to her now?

Mood. Who the devil bid you speak, sirrah?

Sir Mart. Her name, sir, was Mrs. Dorothy Drawwater.

Sir John. I'll be hanged if this be not some cheat.

Mill. He makes so many stumbles, he must needs fall at last.

Mood. But you remember, I hope, where you were born?

Warn. Well, they may talk what they will of Oxford for an university, but Cambridge for my money.

Mood. Hold your tongue, you scanderbag rogue you, this is the second time you have been talking when you should not.

Sir Mart. I was born at Cambridge, I remember it as perfectly as if it were but yesterday.

Warn. How I sweat for him! he's remembering ever since he was born.

Mood. And who did you go over with to the East Indies?

Sir Mart. Warner!

Warn. 'Twas a happy thing, sir, you lighted upon so honest a merchant as Mr. Bonaventure to take care of him.

Mood. Saucy rascal, this is past all sufferance.

Rose. We are undone, Warner, if this discourse go on any further.

Lord. Pray, sir, take pity on the poor gentleman, he has more need of a good supper than to be asked so many questions.

Sir John. These are rogues, sir, I plainly perceive it; pray let me ask him one question. Which way did you come home, sir?

Sir Mart. We came home by land, sir.

Warn. That is, from India to Persia, from Persia to Turkey, from Turkey to Germany, from Germany to France.

Sir John. And from thence over the narrow seas on horseback.

Mood. 'Tis so, I discern it now; but some shall smoke for't. Stay a little, Anthony, I'll be with you presently. [*Exit MOODY.*]

Warn. That wicked old man is gone for no good, I am afraid; would I were fairly quit of him. [*Aside.*]

Mill. [*aside.*] Tell me no more of Sir Martin, Rose; he wants

natural sense to talk after this rate; but for this Warner, I am strangely taken with him; how handsomely he brought him off!

Enter MOODY, with two cudgels.

Mood. Among half a score of tough cudgels, I had in my chamber, I have made choice of these two, as best able to hold out.

Mill. Alas! poor Warner must be beaten now for all his wit, would I could bear it for him. *[Aside.]*

Warn. But to what end is all this preparation, sir?

Mood. In the first place, for your worship, and in the next, for this East India apostle, that will needs be my son Anthony.

Warn. Why, d'ye think he is not?

Mood. No, thou wicked accomplice in his designs, I know he is not—

Warn. Who, I his accomplice? I beseech you, sir, what is it to me, if he should prove a counterfeit? I assure you he has cozened me in the first place.

Sir John. That's likely, i'faith! Cozen his own servant?

Warn. As I hope for mercy, sir, I am an utter stranger to him, he took me up but yesterday, and told me the story word for word, as he told it you.

Sir Mart. What will become of us two now? I trust to the rogue's wit to bring me off. *[Aside.]*

Mood. If thou would'st have me believe thee, take one of these two cudgels, and help me to lay it on soundly.

Warn. With all my heart.

Mood. Out, you cheat, you hypocrite, you impostor! do you come hither to cozen an honest man? *[Beats him.]*

Sir Mart. Hold, hold, sir!

Warn. Do you come hither with a lie to get a father, Mr. Anthony of East India?

Sir Mart. Hold, you inhuman butcher.

Warn. I'll teach you to counterfeit again, sir.

Sir Mart. The rogue will murder me. *[Exit SIR MARTIN.]*

Mood. A fair riddance of 'em both; let's in and laugh at 'em. *[Exeunt.]*

Re-enter SIR MARTIN and WARNER.

Sir Mart. Was there ever such an affront put upon a man, to be beaten by his servant?

Warn. After my hearty salutations upon your back, sir, may a man have leave to ask you, what news from the Mogul's country?

Sir Mart. I wonder where thou hadst the impudence to move such a question to me, knowing how thou hast used me.

Warn. Now, sir, you may see what comes of your indiscretion and stupidity. I always gave you warning of it, but for this time I am content to pass it by without more words, partly because I have already corrected you, though not so much as you deserve.

Sir Mart. Dost thou think to carry it off at this rate, after such an injury?

Warn. You may thank yourself for't; nay, 'twas very well I found out that way, otherwise I had been suspected as your accomplice.

Sir Mart. But you laid it on with such a vengeance, as if you were beating off a stockfish.

Warn. To confess the truth on't, you had angered me, and I was willing to evaporate my choler; if you will pass it by so, I may chance to help you to your mistress. No more words of this business, I advise you, but go home and grease your back.

Sir Mart. In fine, I must suffer it at his hands; for if my shoulders had not paid for this fault, my purse must have sweat blood for't; the rogue has got such a hank upon me.

Warn. So, so; here's another of our vessels come in,

Enter ROSE.

after the storm that parted us: what comfort, Rose,—no harbour near?

Rose. My Lady, as you may well imagine, is most extremely incensed against Sir Martin, but she applauds your ingenuity to the skies. I'll say no more, but thereby hangs a tale.

Sir Mart. I am considering with myself about a plot, to bring all about again.

Rose. Yet again plotting! If you have such a mind to't, I know no way so proper for you, as to turn poet to Pugenello. [*Music plays.*]

Warn. Hark! Is not that music in your house?

Rose. Yes, Sir John has given my mistress the fiddles, and our old man is as jocund yonder, and does so hug himself, to think how he has been revenged upon you.

Warn. Why, he does not know 'twas we, I hope?

Rose. 'Tis all one for that.

Sir Mart. I have such a plot; I care not, I will speak an' I were to be hanged for't. Shall I speak, dear Warner? let me now; it does so wamble within me, i'faith law; and I can keep it no longer for my heart.

Warn. Well, I am indulgent to you; out with it boldly, in the name of nonsense.

Sir Mart. We two will put on vizards, and with the help of my landlord, who shall be of the party, go a mumming there, and by some device of dancing, get my mistress away unsuspected by 'em all.

Rose. What if this should hit now, when all your projects have failed, Warner?

Warn. Would I were hanged if it be not somewhat probable: nay, now I consider better on't, exceeding probable: it must take; 'tis not in nature to be avoided.

Sir Mart. O must it so, sir! and who may you thank for't!

Warn. Now am I so mad he should be the author of this device. How the plague, sir, came you to stumble on't?

Sir Mart. Why should not my brains be as fruitful as yours, or any man's?

Warn. This is so good, it shall not be your plot, sir; either disown it, or I will proceed no further.

Sir Mart. I would not lose the credit of my plot, to gain my mistress: the plot's a good one, and I'll justify it upon any ground of England; an' you will not work upon it, it shall be done without you.

Rose. I think the knight has reason.

Warn. Well, I'll order it however to the best advantage: hark you, Rose. [*Whispers.*]

Sir Mart. If it miscarry by your ordering, take notice, 'tis your fault, 'tis well invented, I'll take my oath on't.

Rose. I must into 'em, for fear I should be suspected; but I'll acquaint my lord, my old lady, and all the rest who ought to know it, with your design.

Warn. We'll be with you in a twinkling. You and I, Rose, arc to follow our leaders, and be paired to-night—

Rose. To have and to hold are dreadful words, Warner; but for your sake I'll venture on 'em. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter LORD, LADY DUPE, and MRS. CHRISTIAN.

Lady Dupe. Nay, good, my Lord, be patient.

Lord. Does he think to give fiddles and treatments in a house where he has wronged a lady? I'll never suffer it.

Lady Dupe. But upon what ground will you raise your quarrel?

Lord. A very just one, as I am her kinsman.

Lady Dupe. He does not know yet why he was to be arrested; try that way again.

Lord. I'll hear of nothing but revenge. [*Enter ROSE.*]

Rose. Yes, pray hear me one word, my Lord; Sir Martin himself has made a plot.

Chr. That's like to be a good one.

Rose. A fool's plot may be as lucky as a fool's handsell; 'tis a very likely one, and requires nothing for your part but to get a parson in the next room; we'll find work for him.

Lady Dupe. That shall be done immediately; Christian, make haste, and send for Mr. Ball, the Nonconformist; tell him here are two or three angels to be earned.

Chr. And two or three possets to be eaten: may I not put in that, madam?

Lady Dupe. Surely you may. [*Exit MRS. CHRISTIAN.*]

Rose. Then for the rest—'tis only this—Oh! they are here! pray take it in a whisper: my lady knows of it already.

Enter MOODY, SIR JOHN, and MILLICENT.

Mill. Strike up again, fiddle, I'll have a French dance.

Sir John. Let's have the brawls.

Mood. No, good Sir John, no quarrelling among friends.

Lady Dupe. Your company is like to be increased, sir; some neighbours that heard your fiddles, are come a mumming to you.

Mood. Let 'em come in, and we'll be jovy: an' I had but my hobby-horse at home——

Sir John. What are they, men or women?

Lady Dupe. I believe some 'prentices broke loose.

Mill. Rose, go and fetch me down two Indian gowns and vizard masks. You and I will disguise too, and be as good a mummery to them, as they to us. [Exit ROSE.]

Mood. That will be most rare.

Enter SIR MARTIN, WARNER, and LANDLORD, disguised like a Tony

Mood. O, here they come! gentlemen maskers, you are welcome.—[WARNER signs to the music for a dance.]—He signs for a dance, I believe; you are welcome, Mr. Music, strike up, I'll make one, as old as I am.

Sir John. And I'll not be out. [Dance.]

Lord. Gentlemen maskers, you have had the frolic, the next turn is mine; bring two flute glasses, and some stools—ho, we'll have the ladies' health.

Sir John. But why stools, my Lord?

Lord. That you shall see: the humour is, that two men at a time are hoisted up; when they are above, they name their ladies, and the rest of the company dance about them while they drink: this they call the frolic of the altitudes.

Mood. Some Highlander's invention, I'll warrant it.

Lord. Gentlemen maskers, you shall begin.

[They hoist SIR MARTIN and WARNER.]

Sir John. Name the ladies.

Lord. They point to Mrs. Millicent and Mrs. Christian. A lon's touche! touche!

Mood. A rare toping health this: come, Sir John, now you and I will be in our altitudes.

[While they drink the company dances and sings: they are taken down.]

Sir John. What new device is this?

Mood. I know not what to make on't.

[When they are up, the company dances about them: then dance off. TONY dances a jig.]

Sir John [to Tony]. Pray, Mr. Fool, where's the rest o' your company? I would fain see 'em again.

Landl. Come down and tell 'em so, Cudden.

Sir John. I'll be hanged if there be not some plot in't, and this fool is set here to spin out the time.

Mood. Like enough! undone! undone! My daughter's gone; let me down, sirrah.

Landl. Yes, Cudden.

Sir John. My mistress is gone, let me down first.

Landl. This is the quickest way, Cudden.

[*He offers to pull down the stools.*]

Sir John. Hold ! hold ! or thou wilt break my neck.

Landl. An' you will not come down, you may stay there, Cudden. [*Exit LANDLORD, dancing.*]

Mood. O scanderbag villains !

Sir John. Is there no getting down ?

Mood. All this was long of you, Sir Jack.

Sir John. 'Twas long of yourself to invite them hither.

Mood. Oh, you young coxcomb, to be drawn in thus !

Sir John. You old sot, you, to be caught so sillily !

Mood. Come but an inch nearer, and I'll so claw thee.

Sir John. I hope I shall reach to thee.

Mood. And 'twere not for thy wooden breast-work there.

Sir John. I hope to push thee down from Babylon.

Enter LORD, LADY DUPE, SIR MARTIN, WARNER, ROSE, MILLICENT (veiled), and LANDLORD.

Lord. How, gentlemen ! what, quarrelling among yourselves !

Mood. Ods bobs ! help me down, and let me have fair play ; he shall never marry my daughter.

Sir Martin [*leading Rose*]. No, I'll be sworn, that he shall not ; therefore never repine, sir, for marriages, you know, are made in Heaven : in fine, sir, we are joined together in spite of fortune.

Rose [*pulling off her mask*]. That we are, indeed, Sir Martin, and these are witnesses ; therefore, in fine, never repine, sir, for marriages, you know, are made in Heaven.

Omnes. Rose !

Warn. What, is Rose split in two ? sure I ha' got one Rose !

Mill. I, the best Rose you ever got in all your life.

[*Pulls off her mask.*]

Warn. This amazeth me so much, I know not what to say or think.

Mood. My daughter married to Warner !

Sir Mart. Well, I thought it impossible any man in England should have over-reached me ; sure, Warner, there was some mistake in this : prithee, Billy, let's go to the parson to set all right again, that every man may have his own before the matter go too far.

Warn. Well, sir, for my part I will have nothing farther to do with these women, for I find they will be too hard for us, but e'en sit down by the loss, and content myself with my hardfortune. But, madam, do you ever think I will forgive you this, to cheat me into an estate of £2,000 a year ?

Sir Mart. An' I were as thee, I would not be so served, Warner !

Mill. I have served him but right, for the cheat he put upon me,

when he persuaded me you were a wit—now, there's a trick for your trick, sir.

Warn. Nay, I confess you have outwitted me.

Sir John. Let me down, and I'll forgive all freely.

[*They let him down.*]

Mood. What am I kept here for?

Warn. I might in policy keep you there; but, for once, sir, I'll trust your good nature.

[*Takes him down too.*]

Mood. An' thou wert a gentleman, it would not grieve me!

Mill. That I was assured of before I married him, by my Lord here.

Lord. I cannot refuse to own him for my kinsman, though his father's sufferings, in the late times, hath ruined his fortunes.

Mood. But yet he has been a serving-man.

Warn. You are mistaken, sir; I have been a master, and besides, there's an estate of £800 a year, only it is mortgaged for £6,000.

Mood. Well, we'll bring it off, and for my part I am glad my daughter has missed in fine, there.

Sir John. I will not be the only man that must sleep without a bedfellow to-night, if this lady will once again receive me.

Lady Dupe. She's yours, sir.

Lord. And the same parson that did the former execution, is still in the next chamber. What with caudles, wine, and quidding, which he has taken in abundance, I think he will be able to wheedle two more of you into matrimony.

Mill. Poor Sir Martin looks melancholy! I am half afraid he is in love.

Warn. Not with the lady that took him for a wit, I hope.

Rose. At least, Sir Martin can do more than you, Mr. Warner, for he can make me a lady, which you cannot my mistress.

Sir Mart. I have lost nothing but my man, and, in fine, I shall get another.

Mill. You'll do very well, Sir Martin, for you'll never be your own man, I assure you.

Warn. For my part, I had loved you before, if I had followed my inclination.

Mill. But now, I am afraid, you begin of the latest, except your love can grow up like a mushroom, at a night's warning.

Warn. For that matter never trouble yourself; I can love as fast as any man when I am nigh possession; my love falls heavy, and never moves quick till it comes near the centre; he's an ill falconer that will unhood before the quarry be in sight.

Love's an high-mettled hawk, that beats the air,
But soon grows weary when the game's not near,

THE MISTAKE.

A COMEDY.

(MOLIÈRES "*LE DÉPIT AMOUREUX*.")

BY JOHN VANBRUGH.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON ALVAREZ, <i>father to</i> LEONORA.	LOPEZ, <i>servant to</i> DON LORENZO.
DON FELIX, <i>father to</i> DON LORENZO.	TOLEDO, <i>a bravo</i> .
DON CARLOS, <i>in love with</i> LEONORA.	LEONORA, <i>daughter to</i> DON ALVAREZ.
DON LORENZO, <i>in love with</i> LEONORA.	CAMILLO, <i>supposed son to</i> DON ALVAREZ.
METAPHRASTUS, <i>tutor to</i> CAMILLO.	ISABELLA, <i>her friend</i> .
SANCHO, <i>servant to</i> DON CARLOS.	JACINTA, <i>servant to</i> LEONORA.

SCENE.—A TOWN IN SPAIN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter DON CARLOS *and* SANCHO.

Don Car. I tell thee, I am not satisfied ; I'm in love enough to be suspicious of everybody.

San. And yet methinks, sir, you should leave me out.

Don Car. It may be so, I can't tell ; but I'm not at ease. If they don't make a knave, at least they'll make a fool of thee.

San. I don't believe a word on't. But good faith, master, your love makes somewhat of you ; I don't know what 'tis, but methinks when you suspect me, you don't seem a man of half those parts I used to take you for. Look in my face, 'tis round and comely, not one hollow line of a villain in it. Men of my fabric don't use to be suspected for knaves ; and when you take us for fools, we never take you for wise men. For my part, in this present case, I take myself to be mighty deep. A stander-by, sir, sees more than a gamester. You are pleased to be jealous of your poor mistress without a cause. She uses you but too well, in my humble opinion. She sees you, and talks with you, till I am quite tired on't sometimes ; and your rival, that you are so scared about, forces a visit upon her about once in a fortnight.

Don Car. Alas ! thou art ignorant in these affairs : he that's the civillest received is often the least cared for. Women appear warm

to one, to hide a flame for another. Lorenzo, in short, appears too composed of late to be a rejected lover; and the indifference he shows upon the favours I seem to receive from her, poisons the pleasure I else should taste in 'em, and keeps me on a perpetual rack. No! I would fain see some of his jealous transports; have him fire at the sight o' me, contradict me whenever I speak, affront me wherever he meets me, challenge me, fight me——

San. Run you through.

Don Car. But he's too calm, his heart's too much at ease to leave me mine at rest.

San. But, sir, you forget that there are two ways for our hearts to get at ease: when our mistresses come to be very fond of us, or we, not to care a fig for them. Now suppose, upon the rebukes you know he has had, it should chance to be the latter.

Don Car. Again thy ignorance appears. Alas! a lover who has broke his chain will shun the tyrant that enslaved him. Indifference never is his lot; he loves or hates for ever; and if his mistress prove another's prize, he cannot calmly see her in his arms.

San. For my part, master, I'm not so great a philosopher as you be, nor (thank my stars) so bitter a lover, but what I see—that I generally believe; and when Jacinta tells me she loves me dearly, I have good thoughts enough of my person never to doubt the truth on't. See, here the baggage comes.

Enter JACINTA with a letter.

Hist, Jacinta, my dear!

Jac. Who's that? Blunderbuss! Where's your master?

San. Hard by.

[*Pointing to DON CARLOS.*]

Jac. O, sir! I'm glad I have found you at last; I believe I have travelled five miles after you, and could neither find you at home, nor in the walks, nor at church, nor at the opera, nor——

San. Nor anywhere else, where he was not to be found. If you had looked for him where he was, 'twas ten to one but you had met with him.

Jac. I had, Jack-a-dandy!

Don Car. But, prithee, what's the matter? who sent you after me?

Jac. One who's never well but when she sees you, I think; 'twas my lady.

Don Car. Dear Jacinta, I fain would flatter myself, but am not able; the blessing's too great to be my lot. Yet 'tis not well to trifle with me: how short soe'er I am in other merit, the tenderness I have for Leonora claims something from her generosity. I should not be deluded.

Jac. And why do you think you are? methinks she's pretty well above-board with you. What must be done more to satisfy you?

San. Why, Lorenzo must hang himself, and then we are content.

Jac. How! Lorenzo!

San. If less will do, he'll tell you.

Jac. Why, you are not mad, sir, are you? Jealous of him! Pray which way may this have got into your head? I took you for a man of sense before—[*To* SANCHO.] Is this your doings, Log?

San. No, forsooth, Pert! I'm not much given to suspicion, as you can tell, Mrs. Forward; if I were, I might find more cause, I guess, than your mistress has given our master here. But I have so many pretty thoughts of my own person, housewife, more than I have of yours, that I stand in dread of no man.

Jac. That's the way to prosper; however, so far I'll confess the truth to thee; at least, if that don't do, nothing else will. Men are mighty simple in love-matters, sir. When you suspect a woman's falling off, you fall a-plaguing her to bring her on again, attack her with reason, and a sour face. No, sir! attack her with a fiddle, double your good-humour; give her a ball—powder your periwig at her—let her cheat you at cards a little—and I'll warrant all's right again. But to come upon a poor woman with the gloomy face of jealousy, before she gives the least occasion for't, is to set a complaisant rival in too favourable a light. Sir, sir! I must tell you, I have seen those have owed their success to nothing else.

Don Car. Say no more, I have been to blame; but there shall be no more on't.

Jac. I should punish you but justly, however, for what's past, if I carried back what I have brought you; but I'm good-natured, so here 'tis; open it, and see how wrong you timed your jealousy!

Don Car. [*Reads.*] *If you love me with that tenderness you have made me long believe you do, this letter will be welcome; 'tis to tell you, you have leave to plead a daughter's weakness to a father's indulgence: and if you prevail with him to lay his commands upon me, you shall be as happy as my obedience to 'em can make you.*

LEONORA.

Then I shall be what man was never yet.—[*Kissing the letter.*] Ten thousand blessings on thee for thy news!—I could adore thee as a deity!

[*Embracing* JACINTA.

San. True flesh and blood, every inch of her, for all that.

Don Car. [*Reads again.*] *And if you prevail with him to lay his commands upon me, you shall be as happy as my obedience to 'em can make you.*—O happy, happy Carlos!—But what shall I say to thee for this welcome message? Alas! I want words.—But let this speak for me, and this, and this, and—

[*Giving her his ring, watch, and purse.*

San. Hold, sir; pray leave a little something for our board-wages.—[*To* JACINTA.] You can't carry 'em all, I believe: shall I ease thee of this?

[*Offering to take the purse.*

Jac. No; but you may carry—that, sirrah.

[*Giving him a box on the ear.*

San. The jade's grown purse-proud already.

Don Car. Well, dear Jacinta, say something to your charming mistress, that I am not able to say myself; but above all, excuse my late unpardonable folly, and offer her my life to expiate my crime.

Jac. The best plea for pardon will be never to repeat the fault.

Don Car. If that will do, 'tis sealed for ever.

Jac. Enough. But I must be gone; success attend you with the old gentleman. Good-bye t'ye, sir.

Don Car. Eternal blessings follow thee! [Exit JACINTA.]

San. I think she has taken 'em all with her; the jade has got her apron full.

Don Car. Is not that Lorenzo coming this way?

San. Yes, 'tis he; for my part now I pity the poor gentleman.

Enter DON LORENZO.

Don Car. I'll let him see at last I can be cheerful too.—You servant, Don Lorenzo; how do you do this morning?

Don Lor. I thank you, Don Carlos, perfectly well, both in body and in mind.

Don Car. What! cured of your love then?

Don Lor. No, nor I hope I never shall. May I ask you how 'tis with yours?

Don Car. Increasing every hour; we are very constant both.

Don Lor. I find so much delight in being so I hope I never shall be otherwise.

Don Car. Those joys I am well acquainted with, but should lose 'em soon were I to meet a cool reception.

Don Lor. That's every generous lover's case, no doubt; an angel could not fire my heart but with an equal flame.

Don Car. And yet you said you still loved Leonora.

Don Lor. And yet I said I loved her.

Don Car. Does she then return you—

Don Lor. Everything my passion can require.

Don Car. Its wants are small, I find.

Don Lor. Extended as the heavens.

Don Car. I pity you.

Don Lor. He must be a deity that does so.

Don Car. Yet I'm a mortal, and once more can pity you.

Alas! Lorenzo,

'Tis a poor cordial to an aching heart,

To have the tongue alone announce it happy:

Besides, 'tis mean, you should be more a man.

Don Lor. I find I have made you an unhappy one, so can forgive the boilings of your spleen.

Don Car. This seeming calmness might have the effect your vanity proposes by it, had I not a testimony of her love would (should I show it) sink you to the centre.

Don Lor. Yet still I'm calm as ever.

Don Car. Nay, then have at your peace. Read that, and end the farce. [Gives him LEONORA'S letter.]

Don Lor. [after reading.] I have read it.

Don Car. And know the hand?

Don Lor. 'Tis Leonora's; I have often seen it.

Don Car. I hope you then at last are satisfied.

Don Lor. [*smiling.*] I am. Good morrow, Carlos ! [*Exit.*]

San. Sure's he mad, master.

Don Car. Mad ! sayest thou ?

San. And yet, by'r Lady, that was a sort of a dry sober smile at going off.

Don Car. A very sober one ! Had he shown me such a letter, I had put on another countenance.

San. Ay, o' my conscience had you.

Don Car. Here's mystery in this—I like it not.

San. I see his man and confidant there, Lopez. Shall I draw him on a Scotch pair of boots, master, and make him tell all ?

Don Car. Some questions I must ask him ; call him hither.

San. Hem, Lopez, hem !

Enter LOPEZ.

Lop. Who calls ?

San. I and my master.

Lop. I can't stay.

San. You can indeed, sir.

[*Laying hold on him.*]

Don Car. Whither in such haste, honest Lopez ? What ! upon some love-errand ?

Lop. Sir, your servant ; I ask your pardon, but I was going—

Don Car. I guess where ; but you need not be shy of me any more, thy master and I are no longer rivals ; I have yielded up the cause ; the lady will have it so, so I submit.

Lop. Is it possible, sir ? Shall I then live to see my master and you friends again ?

San. Yes ; and what's better, thou and I shall be friends too. There will be no more fear of Christian bloodshed, I give thee up, Jacinta ; she's a slippery housewife, so master and I are going to match ourselves elsewhere.

Lop. But is it possible, sir, your honour should be in earnest ? I'm afraid you are pleased to be merry with your poor humble servant.

Don Car. I'm not at present much disposed to mirth ; my indifference in this matter is not so thoroughly formed ; but my reason has so far mastered my passion, to show me 'tis in vain to pursue a woman whose heart already is another's. 'Tis what I have so plainly seen of late, I have roused my resolution to my aid, and broke my chains for ever.

Lop. Well, sir, to be plain with you, this is the joyfullest news I have heard this long time ; for I always knew you to be a mighty honest gentleman, and, good faith, it often went to the heart o' me to see you so abused. Dear, dear, have I often said to myself (when they have had a private meeting just after you have been gone)—

Don Car. Ha !

San. Hold, master, don't kill him yet. [*Aside to DON CARLOS.*]

Lop. I say I have said to myself, what wicked things are women,

and what pity it is they should be suffered in a Christian country ! what a shame they should be allowed to play will-in-the-wisp with men of honour, and lead them through thorns and briars, and rocks, and rugged ways, till their hearts are torn in pieces, like an old coat in a fox-chase ! I say, I have said to myself——

Don Car. Thou hast said enough to thyself, but say a little more to me. Where were these secret meetings thou talkest of ?

Lop. In sundry places, and by divers ways ; sometimes in the cellar, sometimes in the garret, sometimes in the court, sometimes in the gutter ; but the place where the kiss of kisses was given was——

Don Car. In hell !

Lop. Sir !

Don Car. Speak, fury, what dost thou mean by the kiss of kisses ?

Lop. The kiss of peace, sir ; the kiss of union.

Don Car. Thou liest, villain !

Lop. I don't know but I may, sir.—[*Aside.*] What the devil's the matter now ?

Don Car. There's not one word of truth in all thy cursed tongue has uttered.

Lop. No, sir, I—I—believe there is not.

Don Car. Why then didst thou say it, wretch ?

Lop. Oh—only in jest, sir.

Don Car. I am not in a jesting condition.

Lop. Nor I—at present, sir.

Don Car. Speak then the truth, as thou wouldst do it at the hour of death.

Lop. Yes, at the gallows, and be turned off as soon as I've done.
[*Aside.*]

Don Car. What's that you murmur ?

Lop. Nothing but a short prayer.

Don Car. [*aside.*] I am distracted, and fright the wretch from telling me what I am upon the rack to know—[*Aloud.*] Forgive me, Lopez, I am to blame to speak thus harshly to thee. Let this obtain thy pardon.—[*Gives him money.*] Thou seest I am disturbed.

Lop. Yes, sir, I see I have been led into a snare ; I have said too much.

Don Car. And yet thou must say more ; nothing can lessen my torment but a farther knowledge of what causes my misery. Speak, then ! have I anything to hope ?

Lop. Nothing ; but that you may be a happier bachelor than my master may probably be a married man.

Don Car. Married, sayest thou ?

Lop. I did, sir, and I believe he'll say so too in a twelvemonth.

Don Car. O torment !—But give me more on't : when, how, to who, where ?

Lop. Yesterday, to Leonora, by the parson in the pantry.

Don Car. Look to't, if this be false, thy life shall pay the torment thou hast given me. Begone !

Lop. With the body and the soul o' me.

[*Exit.*

San. Base news, master.

Don Car. Now my insulting rival's smile speaks out : O cursed, cursed woman !

Re-enter JACINTA.

Jac. I'm come in haste to tell you, sir, that as soon as the moon's up, my lady'll give you a meeting in the close-walk by the back-door of the garden ; she thinks she has something to propose to you will certainly get her father's consent to marry you.

Don Car. Past sufferance !

This aggravation is not to be borne.

Go, thank her—with my curses. Fly !—

And let 'em blast her, while their venom's strong.

[*Exit.*

Jac. Won't thou explain ? What's this storm for ?

San. And darest thou ask me questions, smooth-faced iniquity, crocodile of Nile, siren of the rocks ! Go, carry back the too gentle answer thou hast received ; only let me add with the poet :—

We are no fools, trollop, my master, nor me ;

And thy mistress may go—to the deuce with thee.

[*Exit.*

Jac. Am I awake !—I fancy not : a very idle dream this. Well : I'll go talk in my sleep to my lady about it ; and when I awake, we'll try what interpretation we can make on't.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An open court near the house of DON ALVAREZ.*

Enter CAMILLO and ISABELIA.

Isab. How can you doubt my secrecy ? have you not proofs of it ?

Cam. Nay, I am determined to trust you ; but are we safe here ? can nobody overhear us ?

Isab. Safer much than in a room. Nobody can come within hearing before we see 'em.

Cam. And yet how hard 'tis for me to break silence !

Isab. Your secret sure must be of great importance.

Cam. You may be sure it is, when I confess 'tis with regret I own it e'en to you ; and, were it possible, you should not know it.

Isab. 'Tis frankly owned indeed ; but 'tis not kind, perhaps not prudent, after what you know I already am acquainted with. Have I not been bred up with you ? and am I ignorant of a secret which, were it known—

Cam. Would be my ruin ; I confess it would. I own you know why both my birth and sex are thus disguised ; you know how I was taken from my cradle to secure the estate which had else been lost by young Camillo's death ; but which is now safe in my supposed father's hands, by my passing for his son ; and 'tis because you know all this, I have resolved to open farther wonders to you. But before I say any more, you must resolve one doubt, which often gives me great disturbance ; whether Don Alvarez ever was him-

self privy to the mystery which has disguised my sex, and made me pass for his son?

Isab. What you ask me is a thing has often perplexed my thoughts as well as yours, nor could my mother ever resolve the doubt. You know when that young child Camillo died, in whom was wrapped up so much expectation, from the great estate his uncle's will (even before he came into the world) had left him; his mother made a secret of his death to her husband Alvarez, and readily fell in with a proposal made her to take you (who then was just Camillo's age) and bring you up in his room. You have heard how you were then at nurse with my mother, and how your own was privy and consenting to the plot; but Don Alvarez was never let into it by 'em.

Cam. Don't you then think it probable his wife might after tell him?

Isab. 'Twas ever thought nothing but a death-bed repentance could draw it from her to any one; and that was prevented by the suddenness of her exit to t'other world, which did not give her even time to call Heaven's mercy on her. And yet, now I have said all this, I own the correspondence and friendship I observe he holds with your real mother gives me some suspicion, and the presents he often makes her (which people seldom do for nothing) confirm it. But, since this is all I can say to you on that point, pray let us come to the secret, which you have made me impatient to hear.

Cam. Know, then, that though Cupid is blind he is not to be deceived: I can hide my sex from the world, but not from him; his dart has found the way through the manly garb I wear, to pierce a virgin's tender heart.—I love——

Isab. How!

Cam. Nay, ben't surprised at that, I have other wonders for you.

Isab. Quick, let me hear 'em.

Cam. I love Lorenzo.

Isab. Lorenzo! Most nicely hit! The very man from whom your imposture keeps this vast estate; and who, on the first knowledge of your being a woman, would enter into possession of it. This is indeed a wonder.

Cam. Then, wonder farther still, I am his wife.

Isab. Ha! his wife!

Cam. His wife, Isabella; and yet thou hast not all my wonders, I am his wife without his knowledge: he does not even know I am a woman.

Isab. Madam, your humble servant; if you please to go on, I won't interrupt you, indeed I won't.

Cam. Then hear how these strange things have passed: Lorenzo, bound unregarded in my sister's chains, seemed in my eyes a conquest worth her care. Nor could I see him treated with contempt without growing warm in his interest: I blamed Leonora for not being touched with his merit; I blamed her so long, till I grew

touched with it myself : and the reasons I urged to vanquish her heart insensibly made a conquest of my own. 'Twas thus, my friend, I fell. What was next to be done my passion pointed out ; my heart I felt was warmed to a noble enterprise, I gave it way, and boldly on it led me. Leonora's name and voice, in the dark shades of night, I borrowed, to engage the object of my wishes. I met him, Isabella, and so deceived him ; he cannot blame me sure, for much I blessed him. But to finish this strange story : in short, I owned I long had loved ; but, finding my father most averse to my desires, I at last had forced myself to this secret correspondence ; I urged the mischiefs would attend the knowledge on't, I urged 'em so, he thought 'em full of weight, So yielded to observe what rules I gave him. They were, to pass the day with cold indifference, To avoid even sign or looks of intimacy, But gather for the still, the secret night, A flood of love To recompense the losses of the day. I will not trouble you with lovers' cares, Nor what contrivances we formed to bring This toying to a solid bliss. Know only, when three nights we thus had passed, The fourth

It was agreed should make us one for ever ; Each kept their promise, and last night has joined us.

Isab. Indeed your talents pass my poor extent ; You serious ladies are well formed for business. What wretched work a poor coquette had made on't ! But still there's that remains will try your skill ; You have your man, but——

Cam. Lovers think no farther. The object of that passion possesses all desire. However, I have opened to you my wondrous situation, if you can advise me in my difficulties to come, you will. But see—my husband !

Enter DON LORENZO.

Don Lor. You look as if you were busy ; pray tell me if I interrupt you ; I'll retire.

Cam. No, no, you have a right to interrupt us, since you were the subject of our discourse.

Don Lor. Was I ?

Cam. You were ; nay, I'll tell you how you entertained us too.

Don Lor. Perhaps I had as good avoid hearing that.

Cam. You need not fear, it was not to your disadvantage ; I was commending you, and saying, if I had been a woman, I had been in danger ; nay, I think I said I should infallibly have been in love with you.

Don Lor. While such an if is in the way, you run no great risk

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in declaring ; but you'd be finely caught now, should some wonderful transformation give me a claim to your heart.

Cam. Not sorry for't at all, for I ne'er expect to find a mistress please me half so well as you would do, if I were yours.

Don Lor. Since you are so well inclined to me in your wishes, sir, I suppose (as the fates have ordained it) you would have some pleasure in helping me to a mistress, since you can't be mine yourself.

Cam. Indeed I should not.

Don Lor. Then my obligation is but small to you.

Cam. Why, would you have a woman, that is in love with you herself, employ her interest to help you to another ?

Don Lor. No, but you being no woman might.

Cam. Sir, 'tis as a woman I say what I do, and I suppose myself a woman when I design all these favours to you. Therefore, out of that supposition, I have no other good intentions to you than you may expect from anyone that says, he's—sir, your humble servant.

Don Lor. So, unless heaven is pleased to work a miracle, and from a sturdy young fellow make you a kind-hearted young lady, I'm to get little by your good opinion of me.

Cam. Yes, there is one means yet left (on this side a miracle) that would perhaps engage me, if with an honest oath you could declare, were I woman, I might dispute your heart, even with the first of my pretending sex.

Don Lor. Then solemnly and honestly I swear, that had you been a woman, and I the master of the world, I think I should have laid it at your feet.

Cam. Then honestly and solemnly I swear henceforwards all your interest shall be mine.

Don Lor. I have a secret to impart to you will quickly try your friendship.

Cam. I have a secret to unfold to you will put you even to a fiery trial.

Don Lor. What do you mean, Camillo ?

Cam. I mean that I love where I never durst yet own it, yet where 'tis in your power to make me the happiest of—

Don Lor. Explain, Camillo ; and be assured, if your happiness is in my power, 'tis in your own.

Cam. Alas ! you promise me you know not what.

Don Lor. I promise nothing but what I will perform ; name the person.

Cam. 'Tis one who's very near to you.

Don Lor. If 'tis my sister, why all this pain in bringing forth the secret ?

Cam. Alas ! it is your—

Don Lor. Speak !

Cam. I cannot yet ; farewell !

Don Lor. Hold ! pray speak it now.

Cam. I must not ; but when you tell me your secret, you shall know mine.

Don Lor. Mine is not in my power, without the consent of another.

Cam. Get that consent, and then we'll try who best will keep their oaths.

Don Lor. I am content.

Cam. And I. Adieu !

Don Lor. Farewell.

[*Exit.*

Enter LEONORA and JACINTA.

Leo. 'Tis enough : I will revenge myself this way, if it does but torment him. I shall be content to find no other pleasure in it.—Brother, you'll wonder at my change ; after all my ill usage of Lorenzo, I am determined to be his wife.

Cam. How, sister ! so sudden a turn ? This inequality of temper indeed is not commendable.

Leo. Your change, brother, is much more justly surprising ; you hitherto have pleaded for him strongly ; accused me of blindness, cruelty, and pride ; and now I yield to your reasons, and resolve in his favour, you blame my compliance, and appear against his interest.

Cam. I quit his service for what's dearer to me, yours. I have learned from sure intelligence, the attack he made on you was but a feint, and that his heart is in another's chain : I would not therefore see you so exposed, to offer up yourself to one who must refuse you.

Leo. If that be all, leave me my honour to take care of ; I am no stranger to his wishes ; he won't refuse me, brother, nor I hope will you, to tell him of my resolution : if you do, this moment with my own tongue (through all a virgin's blushes) I'll own to him I am determined in his favour.—You pause as if you'd let the task lie on me.

Cam. Neither on you nor me ; I have a reason you are yet a stranger to.

Know then there is a virgin young and tender,
Whose peace and happiness so much are mine,
I cannot see her miserable ;

She loves him with that torrent of desire,
That were the world resign'd her in his stead,
She'd still be wretched.

I will not pique you to a female strife,
By saying you have not charms to tear him from her ;
But I would move you to a female softness,
By telling you her death would wait your conquest.
What I have more to plead is as a brother,
I hope that gives me some small interest in you ;
Whate'er it is, you see how I'd employ it.

Leo. You ne'er could put it to a harder service. I beg a little time to think : pray leave me to myself awhile,

Cam. I shall ; I only ask that you would think. And then you won't refuse me. [*Exeunt CAMILLO and ISABELLA.*]

Fac. Indeed, madam, I'm of your brother's mind, though for another cause ; but sure 'tis worth thinking twice on for your own sake. You are too violent.

Leo. A slighted woman knows no bounds. Vengeance is all the cordial she can have, so snatches at the nearest. Ungrateful wretch ! to use me with such insolence.

Fac. You see me as much enraged at it as you are yourself, yet my brain is roving after the cause, for something there must be ; never letter was received by man with more passion and transport ; I was almost as charming a goddess as yourself, only for bringing it ! Yet when in a moment after I came with a message worth a dozen on't, never was witch so handled ; something must have passed between one and t'other, that's sure.

Leo. Nothing could pass worth my inquiring after, since nothing could happen that can excuse his usage of me ; he had a letter under my hand which owned him master of my heart ; and till I contradicted it with my mouth he ought not to doubt the truth on't.

Fac. Nay, I confess, madam, I han't a word to say for him, I'm afraid he's but a rogue at bottom, as well as my Shameless that attends him ; we are bit, by my troth, and haply well enough served, for listening to the glib tongues of the rascals. But be comforted, madam ; they'll fall into the hands of some foul sluts or other, before they die, that will set our account even with 'em.

Leo. Well, let him laugh ; let him glory in what he has done : he shall see I have a spirit can use him as I ought.

Fac. And let one thing be your comfort by the way, madam, that in spite of all your dear affections to him, you have had the grace to keep him at arm's end.

Leo. In short, my very soul is fired with his treatment ; and if ever that perfidious monster should relent, though he should crawl like a poor worm beneath my feet, nay, plunge a dagger in his heart, to bleed for pardon ; I charge thee strictly, charge thee on thy life, thou do not urge a look to melt me toward him, but strongly buoy me up in brave resentment ; and if thou seest (which Heavens avert !) a glance of weakness in me, rouse to my memory the vile wrongs I've borne, and blazon them with skill in all their glaring colours.

Fac. Madam, never doubt me ; I'm charged to the mouth with iury, and if ever I meet that fat traitor of mine, such a volley will I pour about his ears !—Now Heaven prevent all hasty vows ; but in the humour I am, methinks I'd carry my maidenhood to my cold grave with me, before I'd let it simper at the rascal. But soft ! here comes your father.

Enter DON ALVAREZ.

Don Alv. Leonora, I'd have you retire a little, and send your brother's tutor to me, Metaphrastus.—[*Exeunt* LEONORA and

JACINTA.] I'll try if I can discover, by his tutor, what 'tis that seems so much to work his brain of late ; for something more than common there plainly does appear, yet nothing sure that can disturb his soul, like what I have to torture mine on his account. Sure nothing in this world is worth a troubled mind ! What racks has avarice stretched me on ! I wanted nothing : kind Heaven had given me a plenteous lot, and seated me in great abundance. Why then approve I of this imposture ? What have I gained by it ? Wealth and misery. I have bartered peaceful days for restless nights ; a wretched bargain ! and he that merchandises thus must be undone at last.

Enter METAPHRASTUS.

Metaph. Mandatum tuum curo diligenter.

Don Alv. Master, I had a mind to ask you——

Metaph. The title, master, comes from *magis* and *ter*, which is as much as to say, *thrice worthy*.

Don Alv. I never heard so much before, but it may be true for aught I know. But, master——

Metaph. Go on——

Don Alv. Why so I will if you'll let me, but don't interrupt me then.

Metaph. Enough, proceed.

Don Alv. Why then, master, for the third time, my son Camillo gives me much uneasiness of late ; you know I love him, and have many careful thoughts about him.

Metaph. 'Tis true. *Filio non potest præferri, nisi filius.*

Don Alv. Master, when one has business to talk on, these scholastic expressions are not of use ; I believe you a great Latinist ; possibly you may understand Greek ; those who recommended you to me, said so, and I am willing it should be true ; but the thing I want to discourse you about at present, does not properly give you an occasion to display your learning. Besides, to tell you truth, 'twill at all times be lost upon me ; my father was a wise man, but he taught me nothing beyond common sense. I know but one tongue in the world, which luckily being understood by you as well as me, I fancy whatever thoughts we have to communicate to one another, may reasonably be conveyed in that, without having recourse to the language of Julius Cæsar.

Metaph. You are wrong, but may proceed.

Don Alv. I thank you. What is the matter I do not know ; but though it is of the utmost consequence to me to marry my son, what match soever I propose to him, he still finds some pretence or other to decline it.

Metaph. He is, perhaps, of the humour of a brother of Marcus Tullius, who——

Don Alv. Dear master, leave the Greeks and the Latins, and the Scotch and the Welsh, and let me go on in my business ; what have those people to do with my son's marriage ?

Metaph. Again you are wrong, but go on.

Don Alv. I say then, that I have strong apprehensions, from his refusing all my proposals, that he may have some secret inclination of his own; and to confirm me in this fear, I yesterday observed him (without his knowing it) in a corner of the grove where nobody comes——

Metaph. A place out of the way, you would say; a place of retreat.

Don Alv. Why, the corner of the grove, where nobody comes, is a place of retreat, is it not?

Metaph. In Latin, *secessus*.

Don Alv. Ha!

Metaph. As Virgil has it, *Est in secessu locus*.

Don Alv. How could Virgil have it, when I tell you no soul was there but he and I?

Metaph. Virgil is a famous author; I quote his saying as a phrase more proper to the occasion than that you use, and not as one who was in the wood with you.

Don Alv. And I tell you, I hope to be as famous as any Virgil of 'em all, when I have been dead as long, and have no need of a better phrase than my own to tell you my meaning.

Metaph. You ought however to make choice of the words most used by the best authors. *Tu vivendo bonos*, as they say, *scribendo sequare peritos*.

Don Alv. Again!

Metaph. 'Tis Quintilian's own precept.

Don Alv. Oons!

Metaph. And he has something very learned upon it, that may be of service to you to hear.

Don Alv. You beast, will you hear me speak?

Metaph. What may be the occasion of this unmanly passion? What is it you would have with me?

Don Alv. What you might have known an hour ago, if you had pleased.

Metaph. You would then have me hold my peace—I shall.

Don Alv. You will do very well.

Metaph. You see I do; well, go on.

Don Alv. Why, then, to begin once again, I say my son Camillo——

Metaph. Proceed; I shan't interrupt you.

Don Alv. I say, my son Camillo——

Metaph. What is it you say of your son Camillo?

Don Alv. That he has got a dog of a tutor, whose brains I'll beat out if he won't hear me speak.

Metaph. That dog is a philosopher, contemns passion, and yet will hear you.

Don Alv. I don't believe a word on't, but I'll try once again. I have a mind to know from you, whether you have observed anything in my son——

Metaph. Nothing that is like his father. Go on.

Don Alv. Have a care !

Metaph. I do not interrupt you ; but you are long in coming to a conclusion.

Don Alv. Why, thou hast not let me begin yet !

Metaph. And yet it is high time to have made an end.

Don Alv. Dost thou know thy danger ? I have not—thus much patience left.

[*Showing the end of his finger.*]

Metaph. Mine is already consumed. I do not use to be thus treated ; my profession is to teach, and not to hear, yet I have hearkened like a schoolboy, and am not heard, although a master.

Don Alv. Get out of the room !

Metaph. I will not. If the mouth of a wise man be shut, he is, as it were, a fool ; for who shall know his understanding ? Therefore a certain philosopher said well, speak, that thou mayst be known ; great talkers, without knowledge, are as the winds that whistle ; but they who have learning should speak aloud. If this be not permitted, we may expect to see the whole order of nature o'erthrown ; hens devour foxes, and lambs destroy wolves, nurses suck children, and children give suck ; generals mend stockings, and chambermaids take towns ; we may expect, I say—

Don Alv. That, and that, and that, and—

[*Strikes him and kicks him.*]

Metaph. O tempora ! O mores !

[*Exit DON ALVAREZ, following him with a bell at his ear.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Street before the House of DON ALVAREZ.*

Enter LOPEZ.

Lop. Sometimes Fortune seconds a bold design, and when folly has brought us into a trap, impudence brings us out on't. I have been caught by this hot-headed lover here, and have told like a puppy what I shall be beaten for like a dog. Come ! courage, my dear Lopez ; fire will fetch out fire. Thou hast told one body thy master's secret, e'n tell it to half-a-dozen more, and try how that will thrive ; go tell it to the two old Dons, the lovers' fathers. The thing's done, and can't be retrieved ; perhaps they'll lay their two ancient heads together, club a pennyworth of wisdom a-piece, and with great penetration at last find out that 'tis best to submit where 'tis not in their power to do otherwise. This being resolved, there's no time to be lost.

[*Knocks at DON ALVAREZ's door.*]

Don Alv. [*within.*] Who knocks ?

Lop. Lopez.

Don Alv. [*looking out.*] What dost want ?

Lop. To bid you good-morrow, sir.

Don Alv. Well, good-morrow to thee again.

[*Retires.*]

Lop. What a—I think he does not care for my company.

[*Knocks again.*]

Don Alv. [*within.*] Who knocks?

Lop. Lopez.

Don Alv. [*looking out.*] What wouldst have?

Lop. My old master, sir, gives his service to you, and desires to know how you do?

Don Alv. How I do! why, well; how should I do? Service to him again. [*Retires.*]

Lop. Sir!

Don Alv. [*returning.*] What the deuce wouldst thou have with me, with thy good-morrows and thy services?

Lop. [*aside.*] This man does not understand good breeding, I find.—[*Aloud.*] Why, sir, my master has some very earnest business with you.

Don Alv. Business! about what? What business can he have with me?

Lop. I don't know, truly; but 'tis some very important matter. He has just now (as I hear) discovered some great secret, which he must needs talk with you about.

Don Alv. Ha! a secret, sayest thou?

Lop. Yes; and bid me bring him word if you were at home, he'd be with you presently. Sir, your humble servant. [*Exit.*]

Enter DON ALVAREZ, from the house.

Don Alv. A secret; and must speak with me about it! Heavens, how I tremble! What can this message mean? I have very little acquaintance with him, what business can he have with me? An important secret 'twas, he said, and that he had just discovered it. Alas! I have in the world but one, if it be that—I'm lost; an eternal blot must fix upon me. How unfortunate am I, that I have not followed the honest counsels of my heart, which have often urged me to set my conscience at ease, by rendering to him the estate that is his due, and which by a foul imposture I keep from him! But 'tis now too late; my villany is out, and I shall not only be forced with shame to restore him what is his, but shall be perhaps condemned to make him reparation with my own. O terrible view!

Enter DON FELIX.

Don Fel. [*aside.*] My son to go and marry her without her father's knowledge! This can never end well. I don't know what to do, he'll conclude I was privy to it, and his power and interest are so great at Court, he may with ease contrive my ruin. I tremble at his sending to speak with me.—Mercy on me, there he is!

Don Alv. [*aside.*] Ah! shield me, kind Heaven! there's Don Felix come. How I am struck with the sight of him! Oh, the torment of a guilty mind!

Don Fel. What shall I say to soften him?

Don Alv. How shall I look him in the face?

Don Fel. 'Tis impossible he can forgive it.

[*Aside.*]

[*Aside.*]

[*Aside.*]

Don Alv. To be sure he'll expose me to the whole world. [*Aside.*

Don Fel. I see his countenance change. [*Aside.*

Don Alv. With what contempt he looks upon me. [*Aside.*

Don Fel. I see, Don Alvarez, by the disorder of your face you are but too well informed of what brings me here.

Don Alv. 'Tis true.

Don Fel. The news may well surprise you, 'tis what I have been far from apprehending.

Don Alv. Wrong, very wrong indeed.

Don Fel. The action is certainly to the last point to be condemned, and I think nobody should pretend to excuse the guilty.

Don Alv. They are not to be excused, though Heaven may have mercy.

Don Fel. That's what I hope you will consider.

Don Alv. We should act as Christians.

Don Fel. Most certainly.

Don Alv. Let mercy then prevail.

Don Fel. It is indeed of heavenly birth.

Don Alv. Generous Don Felix!

Don Fel. Too indulgent Alvarez!

Don Alv. I thank you on my knee.

Don Fel. 'Tis I ought to have been there first. [*They kneel.*

Don Alv. Is it then possible we are friends?

Don Fel. Embrace me to confirm it. [*They embrace.*

Don Alv. Thou best of men!

Don Fel. Unlooked-for bounty!

Don Alv. [*rising.*] Did you know the torment this unhappy action has given me—

Don Fel. 'Tis impossible it could do otherwise; nor has my trouble been less.

Don Alv. But let my misfortune be kept secret.

Don Fel. Most willingly; my advantage is sufficient by it, without the vanity of making it public to the world.

Don Alv. [*aside.*] Incomparable goodness! That I should thus have wronged a man so worthy.—[*Aloud.*] My honour is then safe?

Don Fel. For ever, even for ever let it be a secret, I am content.

Don Alv. [*aside.*] Noble gentleman!—[*Aloud.*] As to what advantages ought to accrue to you by it, it shall be all to your entire satisfaction.

Don Fel. [*aside.*] Wonderful bounty!—[*Aloud.*] As to that, Don Alvarez, I leave it entirely to you, and shall be content with whatever you think reasonable.

Don Alv. I thank you, from my soul I must, you know I must. —[*Aside.*] This must be an angel, not a man.

Don Fel. The thanks lie on my side, Alvarez, for this unexpected generosity; but may all faults be forgot, and Heaven ever prosper you.

Don Alv. The same prayer I, with a double fervour, offer up for you.

Don Fel. Let us then once more embrace, and be forgiveness sealed for ever.

Don Alv. Agreed ; thou best of men, agreed. [*They embrace.*]

Don Fel. This thing, then, being thus happily terminated, let me own to you, Don Alvarez, I was in extreme apprehensions of your utmost resentment on this occasion ; for I could not doubt but you had formed more happy views in the disposal of so fair a daughter as Leonora, than my poor son's inferior fortune e'er can answer ; but since they are joined, and that——

Don Alv. Ha !

Don Fel. Nay, 'tis very likely to discourse of it may not be very pleasing to you, though your christianity and natural goodness have prevailed on you so generously to forgive it. But to do justice to Leonora, and screen her from your too harsh opinion in this unlucky action, 'twas that cunning, wicked creature that attends her, who by unusual arts wrought her to this breach of duty, for her own inclinations were disposed to all the modesty and resignation a father could ask from a daughter ; my son I can't excuse, but since your bounty does so, I hope you'll quite forget the fault of the less guilty Leonora.

Don Alv. [*aside.*] What a mistake have I lain under here ! and from a groundless apprehension of one misfortune, find myself in the certainty of another.

Don Fel. He looks disturbed ; what can this mean ? [*Aside.*]

Don Alv. [*aside.*] My daughter married to his son !—Confusion ! But I find myself in such unruly agitation, something wrong may happen if I continue with him, I'll therefore leave him.

Don Fel. You seem thoughtful, sir ; I hope there's no——

Don Alv. A sudden disorder I am seized with ; you'll pardon me, I must retire. [*Exit.*]

Don Fel. I don't like this :—he went oddly off.—I doubt he finds this bounty difficult to go through with. His natural resentment is making an attack upon his acquired generosity ; pray Heaven it ben't too strong for't. The misfortune is a great one, and can't but touch him nearly. It was not natural to be so calm ; I wish it don't yet drive him to my ruin. But here comes this young hot-brained coxcomb, who with his midnight amours has been the cause of all this mischief to me.

Enter DON LORENZO.

So, sir, are you come to receive my thanks for your noble exploit ? You think you have done bravely now, ungracious offspring, to bring perpetual troubles on me ! Must there never pass a day, but I must drink some bitter potion or other of your preparation for me ?

Don Lor. I am amazed, sir ; pray what have I done to deserve your anger ?

Don Fel. Nothing, no manner of thing in the world ; nor never do. I am an old testy fellow, and am always scolding, and finding fault for nothing ; complaining that I have got a coxcomb of a son

that makes me weary of my life, fancying he perverts the order of nature, turning day into night, and night into day ; getting whims in my brain, that he consumes his life in idleness, unless he rouses now and then to do some noble stroke of mischief ; and having an impertinent dream at this time, that he has been making the fortune of the family, by an underhand marriage with the daughter of a man who will crush us all to powder for it. Ah—ungracious wretch, to bring an old man into all this trouble ! The pain thou gavest thy mother to bring thee into the world, and the plague thou hast given me to keep thee here, make the getting thee a bitter remembrance to us both. *[Exit.]*

Don Lor. So, all's out !—Here's a noble storm arising, and I'm at sea in a cock-boat ! But which way could this business reach him ? by this traitor Lopez—it must be so ; it could be no other way ; for only he, and the priest that married us, know of it. The villain will never confess though : I must try a little address with him, and conceal my anger.—Oh ! here he comes.

Re-enter LOPEZ.

Lopez !

Lop. Do you call, sir ?

Don Lor. I find all's discovered to my father ; the secret's out ; he knows my marriage.

Lop. He knows your marriage !—How the pest should that happen ? Sir, 'tis impossible !—that's all.

Don Lor. I tell thee 'tis true ; he knows every particular of it.

Lop. He does !—Why then, sir, all I can say is, that Satan and he are better acquainted than the devil and a good Christian ought to be.

Don Lor. Which way he has discovered it I can't tell, nor am I much concerned to know, since, beyond all my expectations, I find him perfectly easy at it, and ready to excuse my fault with better reasons than I can find to do it myself.

Lop. Say you so ?—I'm very glad to hear that ; then all's safe.

[Aside.]

Don Lor. 'Tis unexpected good fortune ; but it could never proceed purely from his own temper ; there must have been pains taken with him to bring him to this calm. I'm sure I owe much to the bounty of some friend or other ; I wish I knew where my obligation lay, that I might acknowledge it as I ought.

Lop. [aside.] Are you thereabouts, i'faith ? Then sharp's the word ; egad I'll own the thing, and receive his bounty for't.—*[Aloud.]* Why, sir—not that I pretend to make a merit o' the matter, for, alas ! I am but your poor hireling, and therefore bound in duty to render you all the service I can ;—but—'tis I have done't.

Don Lor. What hast thou done ?

Lop. What no man else could have done—the job, sir ; told him the secret, and then talked him into a liking on't.

Don Lor. 'Tis impossible : thou dost not tell me true.

Lop. Sir, I scorn to reap anything from another man's labours ; but if this poor piece of service carries any merit with it, you now know where to reward it.

Don Lor. Thou art not serious ?

Lop. I am, or my hunger be my messmate !

Don Lor. And may famine be mine, if I don't reward thee for't as thou deservest !—Dead ! [*Making a pass at him.*]

Lop. Have a care there !—[*Leaping on one side.*] What do you mean, sir ? I bar all surprise.

Don Lor. Traitor ! is this the fruit of the trust I placed in thee, villain ! [*Making another thrust at him.*]

Lop. Take heed, sir ! you'll do one a mischief before y're aware.

Don Lor. What recompense canst thou make me, wretch, for this piece of treachery ? Thy sordid blood can't expiate the thousandth ! —But I'll have it, however. [*Thrusts again.*]

Lop. Look you there again ! Pray, sir, be quiet ; is the devil in you ? 'Tis bad jesting with edged tools. Egad, that last push was within an inch o' me ! I don't know what you make all this bustle about ; but I'm sure I've done all for the best, and I believe 'twill prove for the best too at last, if you'll have but a little patience. But if gentlemen will be in their airs in a moment—Why, what the deuce—I'm sure I have been as eloquent as Cicero in your behalf ! and I don't doubt, to good purpose too, if you'll give things time to work. But nothing but foul language, and naked swords about the house !—Sa, sa ! run you through, you dog ! Why nobody can do business at this rate.

Don Lor. And suppose your project fail, and I'm ruined by't, sir !

Lop. Why, 'twill be time enough to kill me then, sir ; won't it ? What should you do it for now ? Besides, I an't ready, I'm not prepared ; I might be undone by't.

Don Lor. But what will Leonora say to her marriage being known, wretch ?

Lop. Why maybe she'll draw—her sword too.—[*Showing his tongue.*] But all shall be well with you both, if you will but let me alone.

Don Lor. Peace ! here's her father.

Lop. That's well : we shall see how things go presently.

Re-enter DON ALVAREZ.

Don Alv. [*aside.*] The more I recover from the disorder this discourse has put me in, the more strange the whole adventure appears to me. Leonora maintains there is not a word of truth in what I have heard ; that she knows nothing of marriage ; and, indeed, she tells me this with such a naked air of sincerity, that, for my part, I believe her. What then must be their project ? Some villanous intention, to be sure ; though which way I yet am ignorant. —But here's the bridegroom ; I'll accost him.—[*Aloud.*] I am told,

sir, you take upon you to scandalize my daughter, and tell idle tales of what can never happen.

Lop. Now methinks, sir, if you treated your son-in-law with a little more civility, things might go just as well in the main.

Don Alv. What means this insolent fellow by my son-in-law? I suppose 'tis you, villain, are the author of this impudent story.

Lop. You seem angry, sir;—perhaps without cause.

Don Alv. Cause, traitor! Is a cause wanting where a daughter's defamed, and a noble family scandalized?

Lop. There he is, let him answer you.

Don Alv. I should be glad he'd answer me: why, if he had any desires to my daughter, he did not make his approaches like a man of honour.

Lop. Yes; and so have had the doors bolted against him, like a house-breaker. *[Aside.]*

Don Lor. Sir, to justify my proceeding, I have little to say; but to excuse it, I have much, if any allowance may be made to a passion which, in your youth, you have yourself been swayed by. I love your daughter to that excess——

Don Alv. You would undo her for a night's lodging.

Don Lor. Undo her, sir!

Don Alv. Yes, that's the word. You knew it was against her interest to marry you, therefore you endeavoured to win her to't in private; you knew her friends would make a better bargain for her, therefore you kept your designs from their knowledge, and yet you love her to that excess——

Don Lor. I'd readily lay down my life to serve her.

Don Alv. Could you readily lay down fifty thousand pistoles to serve her, your excessive love would come with better credentials: an offer of life is very proper for the attack of a counterscarp, but a thousand ducats will sooner carry a lady's heart. You are a young man, but will learn this when you are older.

Lop. But since things have succeeded better this once, sir, and that my master will prove a most incomparable good husband (for that he'll do, I'll answer for him), and that 'tis too late to recall what's already done, sir——

Don Alv. What's done, villain?

Lop. Sir, I mean—that since my master and my lady are married, and——

Don Alv. Thou liest! they are not married.

Lop. Sir, I say—that since they are married, and that they love each other so passing dearly—indeed, I fancy—that——

Don Alv. Why, this impudence is beyond all bearing! Sir, do you put your rascal upon this?

Don Lor. Sir, I am in a wood! I don't know what it is you mean.

Don Alv. And I am in a plain, sir, and think I may be understood. Do you pretend you are married to my daughter?

Don Lor. Sir, 'tis my happiness on one side, as it is my misfortune on another.

Don Alv. And you do think this idle project can succeed? You do believe your affirming you are married to her will induce both her and me to consent it shall be so?

Lop. Sir, I see you make my master almost out of his wits to hear you talk so; but I, who am but a stander-by now, as I was at the wedding, have mine about me, and desire to know, whether you think this project can succeed? Do you believe your affirming they are not married, will induce both him and I to give up the lady? One short question to bring this matter to an issue,—why do you think they are not married?

Don Alv. Because she utterly renounces it.

Lop. And so she will her religion, if you attack it with that dreadful face. D'ye hear, sir? the poor lady is in love heartily, and I wish all poor ladies that are so, would dispose of themselves so well as she has done; but you scare her out of her senses. Bring her here into the room, speak gently to her, tell her you know the thing is done, that you have it from a man of honour,—me: that maybe you wish it had been otherwise, but are a Christian, and profess mercy, and therefore have resolved to pardon her. Say this, and I shall appear a man of reputation, and have satisfaction made me.

Don Alv. Or an impudent rogue, and have all your bones broke.

Lop. Content!

Don Alv. Agreed!—Leonora!—Who's there? call Leonora.

Lop. All will go rarely, sir; we shall have shot the gulf in a moment. [Aside to LORENZO.]

Enter LEONORA.

Don Alv. Come hither, Leonora.

Lop. So, now we shall see.

Don Alv. I called you to answer for yourself: here's a strong claim upon you; if there be anything in the pretended title, conceal it no farther, it must be known at last, it may as well be so now. Nothing is so uneasy as uncertainty, I would therefore be gladly freed from it. If you have done what I am told you have, 'tis a great fault indeed; but as I fear 'twill carry much of its punishment along with it, I shall rather reduce my resentment into mourning your misfortune, than suffer it to add to your affliction; therefore speak the truth.

Lop. Well, this is fair play; now I speak, sir.—You see, fair lady, the goodness of a tender father, nothing need therefore hinder you from owning a most loving husband. We had like to have been all together by the ears about this business, and pails of blood were ready to run about the house; but, thank Heaven, the sun shines out again, and one word from your sweet mouth makes fair weather for ever. My master has been forced to own your marriage, he begs you'll do so too.

Leo. What does this impudent rascal mean?

Lop. Ha!—madam!

Leo. [*To DON LORENZO*]. Sir, I should be very glad to know what can have been the occasion of this wild report; sure you cannot be yourself a party in it!

Lop. He, he—

Don Lor. Forgive me, dear Leonora, I know you had strong reasons for the secret being longer kept; but 'tis not my fault our marriage is disclosed.

Leo. Our marriage, sir!—

Don Lor. 'Tis known, my dear, though much against my will; but since it is so, 'twould be in vain for us to deny it longer.

Leo. Then, sir, I am your wife? I fell in love with you, and married you without my father's knowledge?

Don Lor. I dare not be so vain to think 'twas love; I humbly am content to owe the blessing to your generosity: You saw the pains I suffer'd for your sake, And in compassion eased 'em.

Leo. I did, sir!

Sure this exceeds all human impudence!

Lop. Truly, I think it does. She'd make an incomparable actress. [*Aside.*]

Don Lor. I begin to be surprised, madam, at your carrying this thing so far; you see there's no occasion for it; and for the discovery, I have already told you 'twas not my fault.

Lop. My master's! no, 'twas I did it. Why, what a bustle's here! I knew things would go well, and so they do, if folks would let 'em. But if ladies will be in their merriments, when gentlemen are upon serious business, why what a deuce can one say to 'em!

Leo. I see this fellow is to be an evidence in your plot. Where you hope to drive, it is hard to guess; for if anything can exceed its impudence, it is its folly. A noble stratagem indeed to win a lady by! I could be diverted with it, but that I see a face of villany requires a rougher treatment: I could almost, methinks, forget my sex, and be my own avenger.

Don Lor. Madam, I am surprised beyond all—

Lop. Pray, sir, let me come to her; you are so surprised you'll make nothing on't: she wants a little snubbing.—Look you, madam, I have seen many a pleasant humour amongst ladies, but you out-cut 'em all. Here's contradiction with a vengeance! You han't been married eight-and-forty hours, and you are slap—at your husband's beard already. Why, do you consider who he is?—who this gentleman is?—and what he can do—by law? Why, he can lock you up—knock you down—tie you neck and heels—

Don Lor. Forbear, you insolent villain, you!

[*Offering to strike him.*]

Leo. That—for what's past however.

Lop. I think—she gave me a box o' th' ear; ha!—[*Giving him a box on the ear. Exit.*]

LEONORA.] Sir, will you suffer your old servants to be used thus by new comers? It's a shame, a mere shame. Sir, will you take a poor dog's advice for once? She denies she's married to you: take her at her word; you have seen some of her humours—let her go.

Don Alv. Well, gentlemen, thus far you see I have heard all with patience; have you content? or how much farther do you design to go with this business?

Lop. Why truly, sir, I think we are near at a stand.

Don Alv. 'Tis time, you villain you!

Lop. Why, and I am a villain now, if every word I've spoke be not as true as—as the Gazette: and your daughter's no better than a—a whimsical young woman, for making disputes among gentlemen. And if everybody had their deserts, she'd have a good—I won't speak it out to inflame reckonings; but let her go, master.

Don Alv. Sir, I don't think it well to spend any more words with your impudent and villanous servant here.

Lop. Thank you, sir; but I'd let her go.

Don Alv. Nor have I more to say to you than this, that you must not think so daring an affront to my family can go long unresented. Farewell!

Don Lor. Well, sir, what have you to say for yourself now? [Exit.]

Lop. Why, sir, I have only to say, that I am a very unfortunate—middle-aged man; and that I believe all the stars upon heaven and earth have been concerned in my destiny. Children now unborn will hereafter sing my downfall in mournful lines, and notes of doleful tune: I am at present troubled in mind, despair around me, signified in appearing gibbets, with a great bundle of dog-whips by way of preparation.

I therefore will go seek some mountain high,
If high enough some mountain may be found,
With distant valley, dreadfully profound,
And from the horrid cliff—look calmly all around.
Farewell!

Don Lor. No, sirrah, I'll see your wretched end myself. Die here, villain! [Drawing his sword.]

Lop. I can't, sir, if anybody looks upon me.

Don Lor. Away, you trifling wretch! but think not to escape, for thou shalt have thy recompense. [Exit.]

Lop. Why, what a mischievous jade is this, to make such an uproar in a family the first day of her marriage! Why, my master won't so much as get a honeymoon out of her! Egad, I'd let her go. If she be thus in her soft and tender youth, she'll be rare company at threescore. Well, he may do as he pleases; but were she my dear, I'd let her go—such a foot at her tail, I'd make the truth bounce out at her mouth like a pellet out a pot-gun. [Exit.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Street.**Enter CAMILLO and ISABELLA.**Isab.* 'Tis an unlucky accident indeed !*Cam.* Ah, Isabella, fate has now determined my undoing ! This thing can ne'er end here ; Leonora and Lorenzo must soon come to some explanation ; the dispute is too monstrous to pass over without further inquiry, which must discover all, and what will be the consequence I tremble at. For whether Don Alvarez knows of the imposture, or whether he is deceived with the rest of the world, when once it breaks out, and that the consequence is the loss of that great wealth he now enjoys by it, what must become of me ? All paternal affections then must cease, and regarding me as an unhappy instrument in the trouble which will then o'erload him, he will return me to my humble birth, and then I'm lost for ever. For what, alas ! will the deceived Lorenzo say ? A wife, with neither fortune, birth, nor beauty, instead of one most plenteously endowed with all. O Heavens ! what a sea of misery I have before me !*Isab.* Indeed you reason right, but these reflections are ill-timed : why did you not employ them sooner ?*Cam.* Because I loved.*Isab.* And don't you do so now ?*Cam.* I do, and therefore 'tis I make these cruel just reflections.*Isab.* So that love, I find, can do anything.*Cam.* Indeed it can. Its powers are wondrous great, its pains no tongue can tell, its bliss no heart conceive ; crowns cannot recompense its torments, heaven scarce supplies its joys. My stake is of this value. Oh, counsel me how I shall save it !*Isab.* Alas ! that counsel's much beyond my wisdom's force, I see no way to help you.*Cam.* And yet 'tis sure there's one.*Isab.* What ?*Cam.* Death.*Isab.* There possibly may be another ; I have a thought this moment—perhaps there's nothing in it ; yet a small passage comes to my remembrance, that I regarded little when it happened—I'll go and search for one may be of service. But hold ; I see Don Carlos. He'll but disturb us now, let us avoid him. [*Exeunt.*]*Enter DON CARLOS and SANCHE.**Don Car.* Repulsed again ! this is not to be borne. What though this villain's story be a falsehood, was I to blame to hearken to it ? This usage cannot be supported : how was it she treated thee ?*San.* Never was ambassador worse received. Madam, my master asks ten thousand pardons, and humbly begs one moment's

interview :—Begone, you rascal you ! Madam, what answer shall I give my master ?—Tell him he's a villain. Indeed, fair lady, I think this is hasty treatment.—Here, my footmen ! toss me this fellow out at the window ;—and away she went to her devotions.

Don Car. Did you see Jacinta ?

San. Yes ; she saluted me with half-a-score rogues and rascals too. I think our destinies are much alike, sir : and, o' my conscience, a couple of scurvy jades we are hampered with.

Don Car. Ungrateful woman ! to receive with such contempt so quick a return of a heart so justly alarmed.

San. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Don Car. What, no allowance to be made to the first transports of a lover's fury, when roused by so dreadful an appearance ! As just as my suspicions were, have I long suffered 'em to arraign her ?

San. No.

Don Car. Have I waited for oaths or imprecations to clear her ?

San. No.

Don Car. Nay, even now is not the whole world still in suspense about her ? whilst I alone conclude her innocent.

San. 'Tis very true.

Don Car. She might, methinks, through this profound respect, Observe a flame another would have cherish'd ;
She might support me against groundless fears,
And save me from a rival's tyranny ;
She might release me from these cruel racks,
And would, no doubt, if she could love as I do.

San. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Don Car. But since she don't, what do I whining here ?
Curse on the base humilities of love !

San. Right.

Don Car. Let children kiss the rod that flays 'em,
Let dogs lie down, and lick the shoe that spurns 'em.

San. Ay.

Don Car. I am a man by nature meant for power ;
The sceptre's given us to wield, and we
Betray our trust whenever
We meanly lay it at a woman's feet.

San. True, we are men, boo !—Come, master, let us both be in a passion ; here's my sceptre—[*showing a cudgel.*] Subject Jacinta, look about you. Sir, was you ever in Muscovy ? the women there love the men dearly. Why ? because—[*shaking his stick*]—there's your love-powder for you. Ah, sir, were we but wise and stout, what work should we make with them ! But this humble love-making spoils 'em all. A rare way indeed to bring matters about with 'em ! We are like to succeed truly !

Don Car. For my part, I never yet could bear a slight from anything, nor will I now. There's but one way, however, to resent it from a woman, and that's to drive her bravely from your heart, and place a worthier in her vacant throne.

San. Now, with submission to my betters, I have another way, sir ; I'll drive my tyrant from my heart, and place myself in her throne. Yes, I will be lord of my own tenement, and keep my household in order. Would you would do so too, master ! For, look you, I have been servitor in a college at Salamanca, and read philosophy with the doctors ; where I found that a woman, in all times, has been observed to be an animal hard to understand, and much inclined to mischief. Now, as an animal is always an animal, and a captain always a captain, so a woman is always a woman : whence it is that a certain Greek says, her head is like a bank of sand ; or, as another, a solid rock ; or, according to a third, a dark lantern. Pray, sir, observe, for this is close reasoning ; and so as the head is the head of the body ; and that the body without a head, is like a head without a tail ; and that where there is neither head nor tail, 'tis a very strange body : so I say a woman is by comparison, do you see, (for nothing explains things like comparisons), I say by comparison, as Aristotle has often said before me, one may compare her to the raging sea. For as the sea, when the wind rises, knits its brows like an angry bull, and that waves mount upon rocks, and rocks mount upon waves ; that porpoises leap like trouts, and whales skip about like gudgeons ; that ships roll like beer-barrels, and mariners pray like saints ; just so, I say, a woman—A woman, I say, just so, when her reason is shipwrecked upon her passion, and the hulk of her understanding lies thumping against the rock of her fury ; then it is, I say, that by certain immotions, which—um—cause, as one may suppose, a sort of convulsive—yes—hurricanious—um—like—in short, a woman is like the devil.

Don Car. Admirably reasoned indeed, Sancho !

San. Pretty well, I thank Heaven.—But here come the crocodiles to weep us into mercy.

Enter LEONORA and JACINTA.

Master, let us show ourselves men, and leave their briny tears to wash their dirty faces.

Don Car. It is not in the power of charms to move me.

San. Nor me, I hope ; and yet I fear those eyes will look out sharp to snatch up such a prize. [*Pointing to JACINTA.*]

Jac. He's coming to us, madam, to beg pardon ; but sure you'll never grant it him !

Leo. If I do, may Heaven never grant me mine.

Jac. That's brave.

Don Car. You look, madam, upon me as if you thought I came to trouble you with my usual importunities ; I'll ease you of that pain, by telling you, my business now is calmly to assure you, but I assure it you with heaven and hell for seconds ; for may the joys of one fly from me, whilst the pains of t'other overtake me, if all your charms displayed e'er shake my resolution ; I'll never see you more.

San. Bon !

Leo. You are a man of that nice honour, sir, I know you'll keep your word : I expected this assurance from you, and came this way only to thank you for't.

Jac. Very well !

Don Car. You did, imperious dame, you did ! How base is woman's pride ! How wretched are the ingredients it is formed of ! If you saw cause for just disdain, why did you not at first repulse me ? Why lead a slave in chains that could not grace your triumphs ? If I am thus to be contemned, think on the favours you have done the wretch, and hide your face for ever.

San. Well argued.

Leo. I own you have hit the only fault the world can charge me with : the favours I have done to you I am indeed ashamed of ; but, since women have their frailties, you'll allow me mine.

Don Car. 'Tis well, extremely well, madam. I'm happy, however, you at last speak frankly. I thank you for it, from my soul I thank you ; but don't expect me grovelling at your feet again ; don't, for if I do——

Leo. You will be treated as you deserve ; trod upon.

Don Car. Give me patience !—But I don't want it ; I am calm. Madam, farewell ; be happy if you can ; by Heavens I wish you so, but never spread your net for me again ; for if you do——

Leo. You'll be running into it.

Don Car. Rather run headlong into fire and flames ; Rather be torn with pincers bit from bit ; Rather be broiled like martyrs upon gridirons !— But I am wrong ; this sounds like passion, and Heaven can tell I am not angry. Madam, I think we have no farther business together ; your most humble servant.

Leo. Farewell t'ye, sir.

Don Car. [to SANCHO.] Come along.—[*Goes to the scene and returns.*] Yet once more before I go (lest you should doubt my resolution) may I starve, perish, rot, be blasted, dead, or any other thing that men or gods can think on, if on any occasion whatever, civil or military, pleasure or business, love or hate, or any other accident of life, I, from this moment, change one word or look with you.

[*As he goes off, SANCHO claps him on the back.*]
Leo. Content !—Come away, Jacinta.

Re-enter DON CARLOS.

Don Car. Yet one word, madam, if you please. I have a little thing here belongs to you, a foolish bauble I once was fond of—[*twitching her picture from his breast*]. Will you accept a trifle from your servant ?

Leo. Willingly, sir. I have a bauble too I think you have some claim to ; you'll wear it for my sake.

[*Breaks a bracelet from her arm, and gives it him.*]

Don Car. Most thankfully. 'This too I should restore you, it once

was yours—[*giving her a table-book.*] By your favour, madam—there is a line or two in it I think you did me once the honour to write with your own fair hand. Here it is. [Reads.]

You love me, Carlos, and would know
The secret movements of my heart,
Whether I give you mine or no,
With yours, methinks, I'd never, never part.

Thus you have encouraged me, and thus you have deceived me.

San. Very true.

Leo. [*pulling out a table-book.*] I have some faithful lines too; I think I can produce 'em. [Reads.]

How long soe'er, to sigh in vain,
My destiny may prove,
My fate (in spite of your disdain)
Will let me glory in your chain,
And give me leave eternally to love.

There, sir, take your poetry again—[*throwing it at his feet.*] 'Tis not much the worse for my wearing; 'twill serve again upon a fresh occasion.

Jac. Well done!

Don Car. I believe I can return the present, madam, with—a pocketfull of your prose.—There!

[*Throwing a handful of letters at her feet.*]

Leo. Jacinta, give me his letters.—There, sir, not to be behind-hand with you.

[*Takes a handful of his letters out of a box, and throws them in his face.*]

Jac. And there! and there! and there, sir!

[*JACINTA throws the rest at him.*]

San. Bless my life, we want ammunition! but for a shift—there! and there! you saucy slut you!

[*SANCHO pulls a pack of dirty cards out of his pocket, and throws them at her; then they close; he pulls off her headclothes, and she his wig, and then part, she running to her mistress, he to his master.*]

Jac. I think, madam, we have clearly the better on't.

Leo. For a proof, I resolve to keep the field.

Jac. Have a care he don't rally and beat you yet though: pray walk off.

Leo. Fear nothing.

San. How the armies stand and gaze at one another after the battle! What think you, sir, of showing yourself a great general, by making an honourable retreat?

Don Car. I scorn it!—O Leonora! Leonora! a heart like mine should not be treated thus!

Leo. Carlos! Carlos! I have not deserved this usage!

Don Car. Barbarous Leonora! but 'tis useless to reproach you;

she that is capable of what you have done, is formed too cruel ever to repent of it. Go on, then, tyrant ; make your bliss complete ; torment me still, for still, alas ! I love enough to be tormented.

Leo. Ah Carlos ! little do you know the tender movements of that thing you name ; the heart where love presides, admits no thought against the honour of its ruler.

Don Car. 'Tis not to call that honour into doubt, If, conscious of our own unworthiness, We interpret every frown to our destruction.

Leo. When jealousy proceeds from such humble apprehensions, it shows itself with more respect than yours has done.

Don Car. And where a heart is guiltless, it easily forgives a greater crime.

Leo. Forgiveness is not now in our debate ; if both have been in fault, 'tis fit that both should suffer for it ; our separation will do justice on us.

Don Car. But since we are ourselves the judges of our crimes, what if we should inflict a gentler punishment ?

Leo. 'Twould but encourage us to sin again.

Don Car. And if it should——

Leo. 'Twould give a fresh occasion for the pleasing exercise of mercy.

Don Car. Right ; and so We act the part of earth and heaven together, Of men and gods, and taste of both their pleasures.

Leo. The banquet's too inviting to refuse it.

Don Car. Then let's fall on, and feed upon't for ever.

[Carries her off, embracing her, and kissing her hand.]

Jac. Ah woman ! foolish, foolish woman !

San. Very foolish indeed.

Jac. But don't expect I'll follow her example.

San. You would, Mopsy, if I'd let you.

Jac. I'd sooner tear my eyes out ; ah—that she had a little of my spirit in her !

San. I believe I shall find thou hast a great deal of her flesh, my charmer ; but 'twon't do ; I am all rock, hard rock, very marble.

Jac. A very pumice stone, you rascal you, if one would try thee ! But to prevent thy humilities, and show thee all submission, would be vain ; to convince thee thou hast nothing but misery and despair before thee, here—take back thy paltry thimble, and be in my debt, for the shirts I have made thee with it.

San. Nay, if y'are at that sport, mistress, I believe I shall lose nothing by the balance of the presents. There, take thy tobacco-stopper, and stop thy——

Jac. Here ; take thy satin pincushion, with thy curious half-hundred of pins in't, thou madest such a vapouring about yesterday. Tell 'em carefully, there's not one wanting.

San. There's thy ivory-hafted knife again, whet it well ; 'tis so blunt 'twill cut nothing but love.

Fac. And there's thy pretty pocket scissors thou hast honoured me with, they'll cut off a leg or an arm. Heaven bless 'em!

San. Here's the enchanted handkerchief you were pleased to endear with your precious blood, when the violence of your love at dinner t'other day made you cut your fingers.—There.

[*Blows his nose in it and gives it her.*]

Fac. The rascal so provokes me, I won't even keep his paltry garters from him. D' you see these? You pitiful beggarly scoundrel you!—There, take 'em, there.

[*She takes her garters off, and flaps them about his face.*]

San. I have but one thing more of thine—[*showing his cudgel.*] I own 'tis the top of all thy presents, and might be useful to me; but that thou mayest have nothing to upbraid me with, e'en take it again with the rest of 'em.

[*Lifting it up to strike her, she leaps about his neck.*]

Fac. Ah, cruel Sancho!—Now beat me, Sancho, do!

San. Rather, like Indian beggars, beat my precious self.

[*Throws away his stick and embraces her.*]

Rather let infants' blood about the streets,

Rather let all the wine about the cellar.

Rather let—Oh, Jacinta—thou hast o'ercome.

How foolish are the great resolves of man!

Resolves, which we neither would keep, nor can.

When those bright eyes in kindness please to shine,

Their goodness I must needs return with mine:

Bless my Jacinta in her Sancho's arms—

Fac. And I my Sancho with Jacinta's charms.

[*Exeunt*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter LOPEZ.

Lop. As soon as it is night, says my master to me, though it cost me my life, I'll enter Leonora's lodgings; therefore make haste, Lopez, prepare everything necessary, three pair of pocket-pistols, two wide-mouthed blunderbusses, some six ells of sword-blade, and a couple of dark lanterns. When my master said this to me; Sir, said I to my master, (that is, I would have said it if I had not been in such a fright I could say nothing, however I'll say it to him now, and shall probably have a quiet hearing,) look you, sir, by dint of reason I intend to confound you. You are resolved, you say, to get into Leonora's lodgings, though the devil stand in the doorway?—Yes, Lopez, that's my resolution.—Very well; and what do you intend to do when you are there?—Why, what an injured man should do; make her sensible of—make her sensible of a pudding! don't you see she's a jade?—She'll raise the house

about your ears, arm the whole family, set the great dog at you.—Were there legions of devils to repulse me, in such a cause I could disperse them all.—Why, then, you have no occasion for help, sir, you may leave me at home to lay the cloth:—No; thou art my ancient friend, my fellow traveller, and to reward thy faithful services this night thou shalt partake my danger and my glory.—Sir, I have got glory enough under you already, to content any reasonable servant for his life.—Thy modesty makes me willing to double my bounty; this night may bring eternal honour to thee and thy family.—Eternal honour, sir, is too much in conscience for a serving man; besides, ambition has been many a great soul's undoing.—I doubt thou art afraid, my Lopez; thou shalt be armed with back, with breast, and head-piece.—They will encumber me in my retreat.—Retreat, my hero! thou never shalt retreat.—Then by my troth I'll never go, sir.—But here he comes.

Enter DON LORENZO.

Don Lor. Will it never be night! sure 'tis the longest day the sun e'er travelled.

Lop. Would 'twere as long as those in Greenland, sir, that you might spin out your life t'other half-year. I don't like these nightly projects; a man can't see what he does. We shall have some scurvy mistake or other happen; a brace of bullets blunder through your head in the dark perhaps, and spoil all your intrigue.

Don Lor. Away, you trembling wretch, away!

Lop. Nay, sir, what I say is purely for your safety; for as to myself, I no more value the losing a quart of blood than I do drinking a quart of wine. Besides, my veins are too full, my physician advised me but yesterday to let go twenty ounces for my health. So you see, sir, there's nothing of that in the case.

Don Lor. Then let me hear no other objections; for till I see Leonora I must lie upon the rack. I cannot bear her resentment, and will pacify her this night, or not live to see to-morrow.

Lop. Well, sir, since you are so determined, I shan't be impertinent with any farther advice; but I think you have laid your design to—[*coughs*](I have got such a cold to-day!) to get in privately, have you not?

Don Lor. Yes; and have taken care to be introduced as far as her chamber door with all secrecy.

Lop. [*coughing.*] This unlucky cough! I had rather have had a fever at another time. Sir, I should be sorry to do you more harm than good upon this occasion; if this cough should come upon me in the midst of the action [*coughs*] and give the alarm to the family, I should not forgive myself as long as I lived.

Don Lor. I have greater ventures than that to take my chance for, and can't dispense with your attendance, sir.

Lop. This 'tis to be a good servant, and make one's self necessary!

Enter TOLEDO.

Tol. Sir,—I am glad I have found you. I am a man of honour, you know, and do always profess losing my life upon a handsome occasion. Sir, I come to offer you my service. I am informed from unquestionable hands that Don Carlos is enraged against you to a dangerous degree; and that old Alvarez has given positive directions to break the legs and arms of your servant Lopez.

Lop. Look you there now, I thought what 'twould come to! What do they meddle with me for? what have I to do in my master's amours? The old Don's got out of his senses, I think; have I married his daughter?

Don Lor. Fear nothing, we'll take care o' thee.—Sir, I thank you for the favour of your intelligence, 'tis nothing however but what I expected, and am provided for.

Tol. Sir, I would advise you to provide yourself with good friends, I desire the honour to keep your back hand myself.

Lop. 'Tis very kind indeed. Pray, sir, have you ne'er a servant with you could hold a racket for me too?

Tol. I have two friends fit to head two armies; and yet—a word in your ear, they shan't cost you above a ducat a piece.

Lop. Take 'em by all means, sir, you were never offered a better pennyworth in your life.

Tol. Ah, sir!—little Diego—you have heard of him; he'd have been worth a legion upon this occasion. You know, I suppose, how they have served him.—They have hanged him, but he made a noble execution; they clapped the rack and the priest to him at once, but could neither get a word of confession nor a groan of repentance; he died mighty well, truly.

Don Lor. Such a man is indeed much to be regretted: as for the rest of your escort, captain, I thank you for 'em, but shall not use 'em.

Tol. I'm sorry for't, sir, because I think you go in very great danger; I'm much afraid your rival won't give you fair play.

Lop. If he does, I'll be hanged! he's a passionate fellow, and cares not what mischief he does.

Don Lor. I shall give him a very good opportunity; for I'll have no other guards about me but you, sir. So come along.

Lop. Why, sir, this is the sin of presumption; setting heaven at defiance, making jack-pudding of a blunderbuss.

Don Lor. No more, but follow.—Hold! turn this way; I see Camillo there. I would avoid him, till I see what part he takes in this odd affair of his sister's. For I would not have the quarrel fixed with him, if it be possible to avoid it. *[Exit.]*

Lop. Sir!—Captain Toledo! one word if you please, sir. I'm mighty sorry to see my master won't accept of your friendly offer. Look ye, I'm not very rich; but as far as the expense of a dollar went, if you'd be so kind to take a little care of me, it should be at your service.

Tol. Let me see;—a dollar you say? but suppose I'm wounded?

Lop. Why, you shall be put to no extraordinary charge upon that: I have been prentice to a barber, and will be your surgeon myself.

Tol. 'Tis too cheap in conscience; but my land-estate is so ill paid this war time—

Lop. That a little industry may be commendable; so say no more, that matter's fixed. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter CAMILLO.

Cam. How miserable a perplexity have I brought myself into! Yet why do I complain? since,
With all the dreadful torture I endure,
I can't repent of one wild step I've made.
O love! what tempests canst thou raise, what storms
Canst thou assuage!
To all thy cruelties I am resign'd. Long years
Through seas of torment I'm content to roll,
So thou wilt guide me to the happy port
Of my Lorenzo's arms,
And bless me there with one calm day at last.

Enter ISABELLA.

What news, dear Isabella? Methinks there's something cheerful in your looks may give a trembling lover hopes. If you have comfort for me, speak, for I indeed have need of it.

Isab. Were your wants yet still greater than they are, I bring a plentiful supply.

Cam. O Heavens! is't possible!

Isab. New mysteries are out, and if you can find charms to win Lorenzo from your sister, no other obstacle is in your way to all you wish.

Cam. Kind messenger from Heaven, speak on.

Isab. Know then, that you are daughter to Alvarez!

Cam. How! daughter to Alvarez!

Isab. You are: the truth this moment's come to light; and till this moment he, although your father, was a stranger to it; nay, did not even know you were a woman. In short, the great estate, which has occasioned these uncommon accidents, was left but on condition of a son; great hopes of one there was, when you destroyed 'em, and to your parents came a most unwelcome guest. To repair the disappointment, you were exchanged for that young Camillo, who few months after died. Your father then was absent, but your mother, quick in contrivance, bold in execution, during that infant's sickness, had resolved his death should not deprive her family of those advantages his life had given it; so ordered things with such dexterity, that once again there passed a change between you. Of this (for reasons yet unknown to me) she made a secret to her

husband, and took such wise precautions, that till this hour 'twas so to all the world, except the person from whom I now have heard it.

Cam. This news indeed affords a view of no unhappy termination; yet there are difficulties still may be of fatal hindrance.

Isab. None, except that one I just now named to you; for to remove the rest, know I have already unfolded all both to Alvarez and Don Felix.

Cam. And how have they received it?

Isab. To your wishes both. As for Lorenzo, he is yet a stranger to all has passed, and the two old fathers desire he may some moments longer continue so. They have agreed to be a little merry with the heats he is in, and engage you in a family quarrel with him.

Cam. I doubt, Isabella, I shall act that part but faintly.

Isab. No matter, you'll make amends for it in the scene of reconciliation.

Cam. Pray Heaven it be my lot to act it with him.

Isab. Here comes Don Felix to wish you joy.

Enter DON FELIX.

Don Fel. Come near, my daughter, and with extended arms of great affection let me receive thee.—[*Kisses her.*] Thou art a dainty wench, good faith thou art, and 'tis a mettled action thou hast done; if Lorenzo don't like thee the better for't, he's a pitiful fellow.

Cam. I'm so encouraged by your forgiveness, sir, methinks I have some flattering hopes of his.

Don Fel. Of his! egad and he had best; I believe he'll meet with his match if he don't. What dost think of trying his courage a little, by way of a joke or so?

Isab. I was just telling her your design, sir.

Don Fel. Why I'm in a mighty witty way upon this whimsical occasion; but I see him coming. You must not appear yet; go your way in to the rest of the people there, and I'll inform him what a squabble he has worked himself into here.

[*Exeunt CAMILLO and ISABELLA.*]

Re-enter DON LORENZO and LOPEZ.

Lop. Pray, sir, don't be so obstinate now, don't affront Heaven at this rate. I had a vision last night about this business on purpose to forewarn you; I dreamt of goose-eggs, a blunt knife, and the snuff of a candle; I'm sure there's mischief towards.

Don Lor. You cowardly rascal, hold your tongue.

Don Fel. Lorenzo, come hither, my boy, I was just going to send for thee. The honour of our ancient family lies in thy hands; there is a combat preparing, thou must fight, my son.

Lop. Look you there now, did not I tell you? Oh, dreams are wondrous things! I never knew that snuff of a candle fail yet.

Don Lor. Sir, I do not doubt but Carlos seeks my life, I hope he'll do it fairly.

Lop. Fairly, do you hear, fairly! give me leave to tell you, sir, folks are not fit to be trusted with lives that don't know how to look better after 'em.—Sir, you gave it him, I hope you'll make him take a little more care on't.

Don Fel. My care shall be to make him do as a man of honour ought to do.

Lop. What, will you let him fight then? Let your own flesh and blood fight?

Don Fel. In a good cause, as this is.

Lop. *O monstrum horrendum!* Now I have that humanity about me, that if a man but talks to me of fighting, I shiver at the name on't.

Don Lor. What you do on this occasion, sir, is worthy of you; and had I been wanting to you, in my due regards before, this noble action would have stamped that impression, which a grateful son ought to have for so generous a father.

Lop. [*aside.*] Very generous truly! gives him leave to be run through for his posterity to brag on a hundred years hence.

Don Lor. I think, sir, as things now stand, it won't be right for me to wait for Carlos's call; I'll if you please prevent him.

Lop. Ay, pray sir, do prevent him by all means; 'tis better made up, as you say, a thousand times.

Don Fel. Hold your tongue, you impertinent jack-a-napes! I will have him fight, and fight like a fury too; if he don't he'll be worsted, I can tell him that.—For know, son, your antagonist is not the person you name, it is an enemy of twice his force.

Lop. O dear! O dear! O dear! and will nobody keep 'em asunder?

Don Lor. Nobody shall keep us asunder, if once I know the man I have to deal with.

Don Fel. Thy man then is—Camillo.

Don Lor. Camillo!

Don Fel. 'Tis he; he'll suffer nobody to decide this quarrel but himself.

Lop. Then there are no seconds, sir?

Don Fel. None.

Lop. He's a brave man.

Don Fel. No, he says nobody's blood shall be spilled on this occasion but theirs who have a title to it.

Lop. I believe he'll scarce have a lawsuit upon the claim.

Don Fel. In short, he accuses thee of a shameful falsehood, in pretending his sister Leonora was thy wife; and has upon it prevailed with his father, as thou hast done with thine, to let the debat be ended by the sword 'twixt him and thee.

Lop. And pray, sir, with submission, one short question, if you please; what may the gentle Leonora say of this business?

Don Fel. She approves of the combat, and marries Carlos.

Lop. Why, God a-mercy !

Don Lor. Is it possible? sure, she's a devil, not a woman.

Lop. Yes, sir, a devil and a woman both, I think.

Don Fel. Well, thou sha't have satisfaction of some of 'em.—
Here they all come.

*Enter DON ALVAREZ, DON CARLOS, LEONORA, JACINTA
and SANCHE.*

Don Alv. Well, Don Felix, have you prepared your son? for mine, he's ready to engage.

Don Lor. And so is his. My wrongs prepare me for a thousand combats. My hand has hitherto been held by the regard I've had to everything of kin to Leonora; but since the monstrous part she acts has driven her from my heart, I call for reparation from her family.

Don Alv. You'll have it, sir; Camillo will attend you instantly.

Lop. O lack! O lack! will nobody do a little something to prevent bloodshed?—[*To LEONORA*] Why, madam, have you no pity, no bowels? Stand and see one of your husbands stotered before your face? 'Tis an arrant shame.

Leo. If widowhood be my fate, I must bear it as I can.

Lop. Why, did you ever hear the like?

Don Lor. Talk to her no more. Her monstrous impudence is no otherwise to be replied to than by a dagger in her brother's heart.

Leo. Yonder he's coming to receive it. But have a care, brave sir, he does not place it in another's.

Don Lor. It is not in his power. He has a rotten cause upon his sword, I'm sorry he is engaged in't; but since he is he must take his fate.—[*To DON CARLOS*.] For you, my bravo, expect me in your turn.

Don Car. You'll find Camillo, sir, will set your hand out.

Don Lor. A beardless boy! You might have matched me better, sir; but prudence is a virtue.

Don Fel. Nay, son, I would not have thee despise thy adversary neither; thou'lt find Camillo will put thee hardly to't.

Don Lor. I wish we were come to the trial. Why does he not appear.

Jac. Now do I hate to hear people brag thus. Sir, with my lady's leave, I'll hold a ducat he disarms you. [*They laugh.*]

Don Lor. Why, what!—I think I'm sported with. Take heed, I warn you all; I am not to be trifled with.

Re-enter CAMILLO and ISABELLA.

Leo. You shan't, sir; here's one will be in earnest with you.

Don Lor. He's welcome: though I had rather have drawn my sword against another.—I'm sorry, Camillo, we should meet on such bad terms as these; yet more sorry your sister should be the

wicked cause on't ; but since nothing will serve her but the blood either of a husband or brother, she shall be glutted with't. Draw !

Lop. Ah Lard ! ah Lard ! ah Lard !

Don Lor. And yet, before I take this instrument of death into my fatal hand, hear me, Camillo ; hear, Alvarez ; all !

I imprecate the utmost powers of Heaven

To shower upon my head the deadliest of its wrath ;

I ask that all hell's torments may unite

To round my soul with one eternal anguish,

If wicked Leonora ben't my wife.

All. O Lord ! O Lord ! O Lord !

Leo. Why then, may all those curses pass him by,

And wrap me in their everlasting pains,

If ever once I had a fleeting thought

Of making him my husband.

Lop. O Lord ! O Lord ! O Lord !

Leo. Nay more ; to strike him dumb at once, and show what men with honest looks can practise, know he's married to another.

Don Alv. & Don Fel. How !

Leo. The truth of this is known to some here.

Fac. Nay, 'tis certainly so.

Isab. 'Tis to a friend of mine.

Don Car. I know the person.

Don Lor. 'Tis false ! and thou art a villain for thy testimony.

Cam. Then let me speak ; what they aver is true, and I myself was, in disguise, a witness of its doing.

Don Lor. Death and confusion ! he a villain too !—Have at thy heart. [*He draws.*]

Lop. Ah !—I can't bear the sight on't.

Cam. Put up that furious thing, there's no business for't.

Don Lor. There's business for a dagger, stripling ; 'tis that should be thy recompense.

Cam. Why then to show thee naked to the world, and close thy mouth for ever—I am myself thy wife——

Don Lor. What does the dog mean ?

Cam. To fall upon the earth and sue for mercy.

[*Kneels and lets her periwig fall off.*]

Don Lor. A woman !——

Lop. Ecod, and a pretty one too ; you wags you !

Don Lor. I'm all amazement !—Rise, Camillo, (if I am still to call you by that name,) and let me hear the wonders you have for me.

Isab. That part her modesty will ask from me.

I'm to inform you then, that this disguise

Hides other mysteries besides a woman ;

A large and fair estate was cover'd by't,

Which with the lady now will be resign'd you.

'Tis true, in justice it was yours before ;

But 'tis the god of love has done you right.

To him you owe this strange discovery ;
Through him you are to know the true Camillo's dead, and that this
fair adventurer is daughter to Alvarez.

Don Lor. Incredible ! But go on ; let me hear more.

Don Fel. She'll tell thee the rest herself the next dark night she
meets thee in the garden.

Don Lor. Ha !—Was it Camillo then, that I——

Isab. It was Camillo who there made you happy ; and who has
virtue, beauty, wit, and love—enough to make you so while life shall
last you.

Don Lor. The proof she gives me of her love deserves a large
acknowledgment indeed. Forgive me, therefore, Leonora, if what I
owe this goodness and these charms, I with my utmost care, my life,
my soul, endeavour to repay.

Cam. Is it then possible you can forgive me ?

Don Lor. Indeed I can ; few crimes have such a claim
To mercy. But join with me then, dear Camillo,
(For still I know you by no other name.)
Join with me to obtain your father's pardon.

Yours, Leonora, too, I must implore ;
And yours, my friend, for now we may be such. [To CARLOS.
Of all I ask forgiveness ; and since there is
So fair a cause of all my wild mistakes,
I hope I by her interest shall obtain it.

Don Alv. You have a claim to mine, Lorenzo, I wish I had so
strong a one to yours ; but if by future services, (though I lay down
my life amongst 'em) I may blot out of your remembrance a fault
(I cannot name), I then shall leave the world in peace.

Don Lor. In peace then, sir, enjoy it ; for from this very hour,
whate'er is past with me is gone for ever. Your daughter is too fair
a mediatrix to be refused his pardon, to whom she owes the charms
she pleads with for it.

From this good day, then let all discord cease ;
Let those to come be harmony and peace :
Henceforth let all our different interests join,
Let fathers, lovers, friends, let all combine,
To make each other's days as bless'd as she will mine.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

THE PLAIN DEALER.

(MOLIÈRE'S "LE MISANTHROPE.")

BY WILLIAM WYCHERLEY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MANLY, *of an honest, surly, nice humour, supposed first, in the time of the Dutch War, to have procured the command of a ship, out of honour, not interest; and choosing a sea-life only to avoid the world.*

FREEMAN, MANLY'S Lieutenant, a gentleman well educated, but of a broken fortune, a complier with the age.

VERNISH, MANLY'S bosom and only Friend.

NOVEL, a pert railing Coxcomb, and an admirer of novelties, makes love to OLIVIA.

MAJOR OLDFOX, an old impertinent Fop, given to scribbling, makes love to the WIDOW BLACKACRE.

LORD PLAUSIBLE, a ceremonious,

supple, commending Coxcomb, in love with OLIVIA.

JERRY BLACKACRE, a true raw Squire, under age, and his Mother's government, bred to the Law.

OLIVIA, MANLY'S Mistress.

FIDELIA, in love with MANLY, and followed him to sea in man's clothes.

ELIZA, Cousin to OLIVIA.

LETTICE, OLIVIA'S Woman.

WIDOW BLACKACRE, a petulant, litigious Widow, always in Law, and Mother to JERRY.

Lawyers, Knights of the Post, Bailiffs and Aldermen, a Bookseller's Apprentice, a Foot-boy, Sailors, Waiters, and Attendants.

SCENE.—LONDON.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Manly's Lodging.*

Enter MANLY, surlily, my LORD PLAUSIBLE following him; and two SAILORS behind.

Man. Tell not me, my good Lord Plausible, of your decorums, supercilious forms, and slavish ceremonies! your little tricks, which you, the spaniels of the world, do daily over and over, for and to one another; not out of love or duty, but your servile fear.

Plaus. Nay, i'faith, i'faith, you are too passionate; and I must humbly beg your pardon and leave to tell you, they are the arts and rules the prudent of the world walk by.

Man. Let 'em. But I'll have no leading-strings ; I can walk alone : I hate a harness, and will not tug on in a faction, kissing my leader behind, that another slave may do the like to me.

Plaus. What, will you be singular then, like nobody ? follow, love, and esteem nobody ?

Man. Rather than be general, like you, follow everybody ; court and kiss everybody ; though perhaps at the same time you hate everybody.

Plaus. Why, seriously, with your pardon, my dear friend——

Man. With your pardon, my no friend, I will not, as you do, whisper my hatred or my scorn ; call a man fool or knave by signs or mouths over his shoulder, whilst you have him in your arms.—For such as you, like common women and pickpockets, are only dangerous to those you embrace.

Plaus. Such as I ! Heavens defend me !—upon my honour——

Man. Upon your title, my lord, if you'd have me believe you.

Plaus. Well, then, as I am a person of honour, I never attempted to abuse or lessen any person in my life.

Man. What, you were afraid ?

Plaus. No ; but seriously, I hate to do a rude thing ; no, faith, I speak well of all mankind.

Man. I thought so ; but know, that speaking well of all mankind is the worst kind of detraction, for it takes away the reputation of the few good men in the world, by making all alike. Now, I speak ill of most men, because they deserve it ; I, that can do a rude thing, rather than an unjust thing.

Plaus. Well, tell not me, my dear friend, what people deserve ; I ne'er mind that. I, like an author in a dedication, never speak well of a man for his sake, but my own ; I will not disparage any man, to disparage myself ; for to speak ill of people behind their backs, is not like a person of honour ; and, truly, to speak ill of 'em to their faces, is not like a complaisant person. But if I did say or do an ill thing to anybody, it should be sure to be behind their backs, out of pure good manners.

Man. Very well ; but I, that am an unmannerly sea-fellow, if I ever speak well of people (which is very seldom indeed), it should be sure to be behind their backs ; and if I would say or do ill to any, it should be to their faces. I would jostle a proud, strutting, overlooking coxcomb, at the head of his sycophants, rather than put out my tongue at him when he were past me ; would frown in the arrogant, big, dull face of an overgrown knave of business, rather than vent my spleen against him when his back were turned ; would give fawning slaves the lie whilst they embrace or commend me ; cowards whilst they brag ; call a rascal by no other title, though his father had left him a duke's ; laugh at fools aloud before their mistresses ; and must desire people to leave me, when their visits grow at last as troublesome as they were at first impertinent.

Plaus. I would not have my visits troublesome.

Man. The only way to be sure not to have 'em troublesome, is to

make 'em when people are not at home ; for your visits, like other good turns, are most obliging when made or done to a man in his absence. Why should any one, because he has nothing to do, go and disturb another man's business ?

Plaus. I beg your pardon, my dear friend.—What, you have business ?

Man. If you have any, I would not detain your lordship.

Plaus. Detain me, dear sir !—I can never have enough of your company.

Man. I'm afraid I should be tiresome : I know not what you think.

Plaus. Well, dear sir, I see you'd have me gone.

Man. But I see you won't.

[*Aside.*

Plaus. Your most faithful—

Man. God be wi'ye, my lord.

Plaus. Your most humble—

Man. Farewell.

Plaus. And eternally—

Man. And eternally ceremony.—[*Aside.*] Then the devil take thee eternally.

Plaus. You shall use no ceremony, by my life.

Man. I do not intend it.

Plaus. Why do you stir then ?

Man. Only to see you out of doors, that I may shut 'em against more welcomes.

Plaus. Nay, faith, that shall not pass upon your most faithful humble servant.

Man. Nor this any more upon me.

[*Aside.*

Plaus. Well, you are too strong for me.

Man. [*aside.*] I'd sooner be visited by the plague ; for that only would keep a man from visits, and his doors shut.

[*Exit, thrusting out my* LORD PLAUSIBLE.

1 *Sail.* Here's a finical fellow, Jack ! What a brave fair-weather captain of a ship he would make !

2 *Sail.* He a captain of a ship ! it must be when she's in the dock then ; for he looks like one of those that get the king's commissions for hulls to sell a king's ship, when a brave fellow has fought her almost to a long-boat.

1 *Sail.* On my conscience then, Jack, that's the reason our bully tar sunk our ship ; not only that the Dutch might not have her, but that the courtiers, who laugh at wooden legs, might not make her prize.

2 *Sail.* A plague of his sinking, Tom ! we have made a base, broken, short voyage of it.

1 *Sail.* Ay, your brisk dealers in honour always make quick returns with their ships to the dock, and their men to the hospitals. 'Tis, let me see, just a month since we set out of the river, and the wind was almost as cross to us as the Dutch.

2 *Sail.* Well, I forgive him sinking my own poor truck, if he

would but have given me time and leave to have saved black Kate of Wapping's small venture.

1 *Sail.* Faith, I forgive him, since, as the purser told me, he sunk the value of five or six thousand pound of his own, with which he was to settle himself somewhere in the Indies ; for our merry lieutenant was to succeed him in his commission for the ship back ; for he was resolved never to return again for England.

2 *Sail.* So it seemed, by his fighting.

1 *Sail.* No ; but he was a-weary of this side of the world here, they say.

2 *Sail.* Ay, or else he would not have bid so fair for a passage into t'other.

1 *Sail.* Jack, thou thinkest thyself in the fore-castle, thou'rt so waggish. But I tell you, then, he had a mind to go live and bask himself on the sunny side of the globe.

2 *Sail.* What, out of any discontent ? for he's always as dogged as an old tarpaulin, when hindered of a voyage by a young pantaloon captain.

1 *Sail.* 'Tis true I never saw him pleased but in the fight ; and then he looked like one of us coming from the pay-table with a new lining to our hats under our arms.

2 *Sail.* He's like the bay of Biscay, rough and angry, let the wind blow where 'twill.

1 *Sail.* Nay, there's no more dealing with him, than with the land in a storm, no near—

2 *Sail.* 'Tis a hurry-durry blade. Dost thou remember after we had tugged hard the old leaky long-boat to save his life, when I welcomed him ashore, he gave me a box on the ear, and called me fawning water-dog ?

Re-enter MANLY with FREEMAN.

1 *Sail.* Hold thy peace, Jack, and stand by ; the foul weather's coming.

Man. You rascals ! dogs ! how could this tame thing get through you ?

1 *Sail.* Faith, to tell your honour the truth, we were at hob in the hall, and whilst my brother and I were quarrelling about a cast, he slunk by us.

2 *Sail.* He's a sneaking fellow I warrant for't.

Man. Have more care for the future, you slaves. Go, and with drawn cutlasses stand at the stair-foot, and keep all that ask for me from coming up ; suppose you were guarding the scuttle to the powder-room. Let none enter here, at your and their peril.

1 *Sail.* No, for the danger would be the same : you would blow them and us up, if we should.

2 *Sail.* Must no one come to you, sir ?

Man. No man, sir.

1 *Sail.* No man, sir ; but a woman then, an't like your honour—

Man. No woman neither, you impertinent dog !

U of M

2 Sail. Indeed, an't like your honour, 'twill be hard for us to deny a woman anything, since we are so newly come on shore.

1 Sail. We'll let no old woman come up, though it were our trusting landlady at Wapping.

Man. Would you be witty, you brandy casks you? you become a jest as ill as you do a horse. Begone, you dogs! I hear a noise on the stairs. [Exeunt SAILORS.

Free. Faith, I am sorry you would let the fop go, I intended to have had some sport with him.

Man. Sport with him! Then why did you not stay? You should have enjoyed your coxcomb, and had him to yourself for me.

Free. No, I should not have cared for him without you neither; for the pleasure which fops afford is like that of drinking, only good when 'tis shared; and a fool, like a bottle, which would make you merry in company, will make you dull alone. But how could you turn a man of his quality down stairs? You use a lord with very little ceremony, it seems.

Man. A lord! What, thou art one of those who esteem men only by the marks and value fortune has set upon 'em, and never consider intrinsic worth! but counterfeit honour will not be current with me: I weigh the man, not his title; 'tis not the king's stamp can make the metal better or heavier. Your lord is a leaden shilling, which you bend every way, and debases the stamp he bears, instead of being raised by it.—Here again, you slaves!

Re-enter SAILORS.

1 Sail. Only to receive farther instructions, an't like your honour.—What if a man should bring you money, should we turn him back?

Man. All men, I say: must I be pestered with you too?—You dogs, away!

2 Sail. Nay, I know one man your honour would not have us hinder coming to you, I'm sure.

Man. Who's that? speak quickly, slaves.

2 Sail. Why, a man that should bring you a challenge. For though you refuse money, I'm sure you love fighting too well to refuse that.

Man. Rogue! rascal! dog!

[Kicks the SAILORS out.

Free. Nay, let the poor rogues have their forecask jests: they cannot help 'em in a fight, scarce when a ship's sinking.

Man. A plague on their untimely jests! a servant's jest is more sauciness than his counsel.

Free. But what, will you see nobody? not your friends?

Man. Friends!—I have but one, and he, I hear, is not in town; nay, can have but one friend, for a true heart admits but of one friendship, as of one love. But in having that friend, I have a thousand; for he has the courage of men in despair, yet the diffidence and caution of cowards; the secrecy of the revengeful, and



the constancy of martyrs ; one fit to advise, to keep a secret, to fight and die for his friend. Such I think him ; for I have trusted him with my mistress in my absence ; and the trust of beauty is sure the greatest we can show.

Free. Well, but all your good thoughts are not for him alone, I hope ? Pray what d'ye think of me for a friend ?

Man. Of thee ! Why, thou art a latitudinarian in friendship, that is, no friend ; thou dost side with all mankind, but wilt suffer for none. Thou art indeed like your Lord Plausible, the pink of courtesy, therefore hast no friendship ; for ceremony and great professing renders friendship as much suspected as it does religion.

Free. And no professing, no ceremony at all in friendship, were as unnatural and as undecent as in religion ; and there is hardly such a thing as an honest hypocrite, who professes himself to be worse than he is, unless it be yourself ; for though I could never get you to say you were my friend, I know you'll prove so.

Man. I must confess, I am so much your friend, I would not deceive you ; therefore must tell you, not only because my heart is taken up, but according to your rules of friendship, I cannot be your friend.

Free. Why, pray ?

Man. Because he that is, you'll say, a true friend to a man, is a friend to all his friends. But you must pardon me, I cannot wish well to flatterers, detractors, and cowards, stiff-nodding knaves, and supple, pliant, kissing fools. Now, all these I have seen you use like the dearest friends in the world.

Free. Ha ! ha ! ha !—What, you observed me, I warrant, in the galleries at Whitehall, doing the business of the place ? Pshaw ? Court professions, like Court promises, go for nothing, man. But, faith, could you think I was a friend to all those I hugged, kissed, flattered, bowed to ? Ha ! ha !—

Man. You told 'em so, and swore it too ; I heard you.

Free. Ay, but when their backs were turned, did not I tell you they were rogues, villains, rascals, whom I despised and hated ?

Man. Very fine ! But what reason had I to believe you spoke your heart to me, since you professed deceiving so many ?

Free. Why, don't you know, good captain, that telling truth is a quality as prejudicial to a man that would thrive in the world, as square play to a cheat ? Would you have a man speak truth to his ruin ? You are severer than the law, which requires no man to swear against himself. You would have me speak truth against myself I warrant, and tell my promising friend the courtier, he has a bad memory.

Man. Yes.

Free. And so make him remember to forget my business ? And I should tell the great lawyer too, that he takes oftener fees to hold his tongue than to speak ?

Man. No doubt on't.

Free. Ay, and have him hang or ruin me, when he should come

to be a judge, and I before him? And you would have me tell the new officer, who bought his employment lately, that he is a coward?

Man. Ay.

Free. And so get myself cashiered, not him, he having the better friends, though I the better sword? And I should tell the scribbler of honour, that heraldry were a prettier and fitter study for so fine a gentleman than poetry?

Man. Certainly.

Free. And so find myself mauled in his next hired lampoon? And you would have me tell the holy lady, too, she is close with her chaplain?

Man. No doubt on't.

Free. And so draw the clergy upon my back, and want a good table to dine at sometimes? And by the same reason too, I should tell you that the world thinks you a mad man, a brutal, and have you cut my throat, or worse, hate me. What other good success of all my plain-dealing could I have, than what I've mentioned?

Man. Why, first, your promising courtier would keep his word out of fear of more reproaches, or at least would give you no more vain hopes: your lawyer would serve you more faithfully; for he, having no honour but his interest, is truest still to him he knows suspects him: the new officer would provoke thee to make him a coward, and so be cashiered, that thou, or some other honest fellow, who had more courage than money, might get his place: the noble sonneteer would trouble thee no more with his madrigals; and I, instead of hating thee, should love thee for thy plain dealing; and in lieu of being mortified, am proud that the world and I think not well of one another.

Free. Well, doctors differ. You are for plain dealing, I find; but against your particular notions, I have the practice of the whole world. Observe but any morning what people do when they get together on the Exchange, in Westminster-hall, or the galleries in Whitehall.

Man. I must confess, there they seem to rehearse Bayes's grand dance. Here you see a bishop bowing low to a gaudy atheist; a judge to a doorkeeper; a great lord to a fishmonger, or scrivener with a jack-chain about his neck; a lawyer to a sergeant-at-arms; a velvet physician to a threadbare chemist; and a supple gentleman-usher to a surly beefeater; and so tread round in a preposterous huddle of ceremony to each other, whilst they can hardly hold their solemn false countenances.

Free. Well, they understand the world.

Man. Which I do not, I confess.

Free. But, sir, pray believe the friendship I promise you real, whatsoever I have professed to others: try me, at least.

Man. Why, what would you do for me?

Free. I would fight for you.

Man. That you would do for your own honour.—But what else?

Free. I would lend you money, if I had it.

Man. To borrow more of me another time. That were putting your money to interest ; a usurer would be as good a friend.—But what other piece of friendship ?

Free. I would speak well of you to your enemies.

Man. To encourage others to be your friends, by a show of gratitude.—But what else ?

Free. Nay, I would not hear you ill spoken of behind your back by my friend.

Man. Nay, then, thou'rt a friend, indeed.—But it were unreasonable to expect it from thee, as the world goes now, when new friends, like new mistresses, are got by disparaging old ones.

Enter FIDELIA.

But here comes another, will say as much at least.—Dost thou not love me too, my little volunteer, as well as he or any man can ?

Fid. Better than any man can love you, my dear captain.

Man. Look you there, I told you so.

Fid. As well as you do truth or honour, sir, as well.

Man. Nay, good young gentleman, enough, for shame ! Thou hast been a page, by thy flattering and lying, to one of those praying ladies who love flattery so well they are jealous of it ; and wert turned away for saying the same things to the old housekeeper for sweetmeats, as you did to your lady ; for thou flatterest everything and everybody alike.

Fid. You, dear sir, should not suspect the truth of what I say of you, though to you. Fame, the old liar, is believed when she speaks wonders of you : you cannot be flattered, sir, your merit is unspeakable.

Man. Hold, hold, sir, or I shall suspect worse of you, that you have been a cushion-bearer to some State hypocrite, and turned away by the chaplains, for out-flattering their probation-sermons for a benefice.

Fid. Suspect me for anything, sir, but the want of love, faith, and duty to you, the bravest, worthiest of mankind ; believe me, I could die for you, sir.

Man. Nay, there you lie, sir ; did not I see thee more afraid in the fight than the chaplain of the ship, or the purser that bought his place ?

Fid. Can he be said to be afraid, that ventures to sea with you ?

Man. Fie ! fie ! no more ; I shall hate thy flattery worse than thy cowardice, nay, than thy bragging.

Fid. Well, I own then I was afraid, mightily afraid : yet for you I would be afraid again, a hundred times afraid. Dying is ceasing to be afraid, and that I could do sure for you, and you'll believe me one day.

[*Weeps.*]

Free. Poor youth ! believe his eyes, if not his tongue : he seems to speak truth with them.

Man. What, does he cry? A plague on't! a maudlin flatterer is as nauseously troublesome as a maudlin drunkard.—No more, you little milksop, do not cry, I'll never make thee afraid again; for of all men, if I had occasion, thou shouldst not be my second; and when I go to sea again, thou shalt venture thy life no more with me.

Fid. Why, will you leave me behind then?—[*Aside.*—If you would preserve my life, I'm sure you should not.

Man. Leave thee behind! ay, ay, thou art a hopeful youth for the shore only. Here thou wilt live to be cherished by fortune and the great ones; for thou mayst easily come to out-flatter a dull poet, outlie a coffee-house or gazette-writer, outswear a knight of the post, outfawn a rook, outpromise a lover, outrail a wit, and outbrag a sea captain:—all this thou canst do, because thou'rt a coward, a thing I hate; therefore thou'lt do better with the world than with me, and these are the good courses you must take in the world. There's good advice, at least, at parting; go, and be happy with't.

Fid. Parting, sir! O let me not hear that dismal word.

Man. If my words frighten thee, begone the sooner; for to be plain with thee, cowardice and I cannot dwell together.

Fid. And cruelty and courage never dwelt together sure, sir. Do not turn me off to shame and misery, for I am helpless and friendless.

Man. Friendless! there are half a score friends for thee then.—[*Offers her gold.*] I leave myself no more: they'll help thee a little. Begone, go, I must be cruel to thee (if thou callest it so) out of pity.

Fid. If you would be cruelly pitiful, sir, let it be with your sword, not gold. [Exit.]

Re-enter First SAILOR.

1 *Sail.* We have, with much ado, turned away two gentlemen, who told us, forty times over, their names were Mr. Novel and Major Oldfox.

Man. Well, to your post again.—[Exit SAILOR.] But how come those puppies coupled always together?

Free. O, the coxcombs keep each other company, to show each other, as Novel calls it; or, as Oldfox says, like two knives, to whet one another.

Man. And set other people's teeth on edge.

Re-enter Second SAILOR.

2 *Sail.* Here is a woman, an't like your honour, scolds and bustles with us, to come in, as much as a seaman's widow at the Navy office: her name is Mrs. Blackacre.

Man. That fiend too!

Free. The widow Blackacre, is it not? that litigious she pettifogger, who is at law and difference with all the world; but I wish I could make her agree with me in the church. They say she has fifteen hundred pounds a year jointure, and the care of her son,—that is, the destruction of his estate.

Man. Her lawyers, attorneys, and solicitors, have fifteen hundred pounds a year, whilst she is contented to be poor, to make other people so. For she is as vexatious as her father was, the great attorney, nay, as a dozen Norfolk attorneys, and as implacable an adversary as a wife suing for alimony, or a parson for his tithes; and she loves an Easter term, or any term, not as other country ladies do, to come up to be fine, and take their pleasure; for she has no pleasure but in vexing others. When she is in town, she lodges in one of the inns of Chancery, where she breeds her son, and is herself his tutoress in law French; and for her country abode, though she has no estate there, she chooses Norfolk.—But, bid her come in, with a plague to her! she is Olivia's kinswoman, and may make me amends for her visit, by some discourse of that dear woman.

[*Exit* SAILOR.]

Enter WIDOW BLACKACRE *with a mantle, and a green bag, and several papers in the other hand*: JERRY BLACKACRE, *in a gown, laden with green bags, following her.*

Wid. I never had so much to do with a judge's doorkeeper as with yours; but—

Man. But the incomparable Olivia, how does she since I went?

Wid. Since you went, my suit—

Man. Olivia, I say, is she well?

Wid. My suit, if you had not returned—

Man. Plague on your suit! how does your cousin Olivia?

Wid. My suit, I say, had been quite lost; but now—

Man. But now, where is Olivia? in town? for—

Wid. For to-morrow we are to have a hearing.

Man. Would you would let me have a hearing to-day!

Wid. But why won't you hear me?

Man. I am no judge, and you talk of nothing but suits; but, pray tell me, when did you see Olivia?

Wid. I am no visitor, but a woman of business; or if I ever visit, 'tis only the Chancery-lane ladies, ladies towards the law; and not any of your lazy, good-for-nothing flirts, who cannot read law-French, though a gallant writ it. But, as I was telling you, my suit—

Man. Out upon these impertinent vexatious people of business, of all sexes! they are still troubling the world with the tedious recitals of their lawsuits; and one can no more stop their mouths than a wit's when he talks of himself, or an intelligencer's when he talks of other people.

Wid. And a plague of all vexatious, impertinent lovers! they are still perplexing the world with the tedious narrations of their lovesuits, and discourses of their mistresses! You are as troublesome to a poor widow of business, as a young coxcomby rhyming lover.

Man. And thou art as troublesome to me, as a rook to a losing gamester, or a young putter of cases to his mistress or sempstress, who has love in her head for another.

Wid. Nay, since you talk of putting of cases, and will not hear me speak, hear our Jerry a little ; let him put our case to you, for the trials, to-morrow ; and since you are my chief witness, I would have your memory refreshed and your judgment informed, that you may not give your evidence improperly.—Speak out, child.

Fer. Yes, forsooth— Hem ! hem ! John-a-Stiles—

Man. You may talk, young lawyer, but I shall no more mind you, than a hungry judge does a cause after the clock has struck one.

Free. Nay, you'll find him as peevish too.

Wid. No matter. Jerry, go on.—Do you observe it then, sir ; for I think I have seen you in a gown once. Lord, I could hear our Jerry put cases all day long.—Mark him, sir.

Fer. John-a-Stiles—no—there are first, Fitz, Pere, and Ayle,—no, no, Ayle, Pere, and Fitz ; Ayle is seised in fee of Blackacre ; John-a-Stiles disseises Ayle ; Ayle makes claim, and the disseisor dies ; then the Ayle—no, the Fitz—

Wid. No, the Pere, sirrah.

Fer. Oh, the Pere ! ay, the Pere, sir, and the Fitz—no, the Ayle,—no, the Pere and the Fitz, sir, and—

Man. Damn Pere, Mere, and Fitz, sir !

Wid. No, you are out, child.—Hear me, captain, then. There are Ayle, Pere, and Fitz ; Ayle is seised in fee of Blackacre ; and, being so seised, John-a-Stiles disseises the Ayle, Ayle makes claim, and the disseisor dies ; and then the Pere re-enters, the Pere, sirrah, the Pere—[to JERRY,] and the Fitz enters upon the Pere, and the Ayle brings his writ of disseisin in the post ; and the Pere brings his writ of disseisin in the Pere, and—

Man. Canst thou hear this stuff, Freeman ? I could as soon suffer a whole noise of flatterers at a great man's levée in a morning ; but thou hast servile complacency enough to listen to a quibbling statesman in disgrace, nay, and be beforehand with him, in laughing at his dull no-jest ; but I—

[Offering to go out.]

Wid. Nay, sir, hold ! Where's the subpoena, Jerry ! I must serve you, sir. You are required by this, to give your testimony—

Man. I'll be forsworn to be revenged on thee.

[Exit, throwing away the subpoena.]

Wid. Get you gone, for a lawless companion !—Come, Jerry, I had almost forgot, we were to meet at the master's at three : let us mind our business still, child.

Fer. Ay, forsooth, e'en so let's.

Free. Nay, madam, now I would beg you to hear me a little, a little of my business.

Wid. I have business of my own calls me away, sir.

Free. My business would prove yours too, dear madam.

Wid. Yours would be some sweet business, I warrant. What ! 'tis no Westminster Hall business ?—would you have my advice ?

Free. No, faith, 'tis a little Westminster Abbey business ; I would have your consent.

Wid. O fie, fie, sir! to me such discourse, before my dear minor there!

Fer. Ay, ay, mother, he would be taking livery and seisin of your jointure, by digging the turf; but I'll watch your waters, bully, i'fac.—Come away, mother. [*Exit, hailing away his mother.*]

Re-enter FIDELIA.

Fid. Dear sir, you have pity; beget but some in our captain for me.

Free. Where is he.

Fid. Within, swearing as much as he did in the great storm, and cursing you, and sometimes sinks into calms and sighs, and talks of his Olivia.

Free. He would never trust me to see her.—Is she handsome?

Fid. No, if you'll take my word; but I am not a proper judge.

Free. What is she?

Fid. A gentlewoman, I suppose, but of as mean a fortune as beauty; but her relations would not suffer her to go with him to the Indies; and his aversion to this side of the world, together with the late opportunity of commanding the convoy, would not let him stay here longer, though to have her.

Free. He loves her mightily then.

Fid. Yes, so well, that the remainder of his fortune (I hear about five or six thousand pounds) he has left her, in case he had died by the way, or before she could prevail with her friends to follow him, which he expected she should do, and has left behind him his great bosom friend to be her convoy to him.

Free. What charms has she for him, if she be not handsome?

Fid. He fancies her, I suppose, the only woman of truth and sincerity in the world.

Free. No common beauty, I confess.

Fid. Or else sure he would not have trusted her with so great a share of his fortune, in his absence, I suppose (since his late loss) all he has.

Free. Why, has he left it in her own custody?

Fid. I am told so.

Free. Then he has showed love to her, indeed, in leaving her, like an old husband that dies as soon as he has made his wife a good jointure.—But I'll go into him, and speak for you, and know more from him of his Olivia. [*Exit.*]

Fid. His Olivia, indeed, his happy Olivia!

Yet she was left behind, when I was with him:

But she was ne'er out of his mind or heart.

She has told him she loved him; I have show'd it.

And durst not tell him so, till I had done,

Under this habit, such convincing acts

Of loving friendship for him, that through it

He first might find out both my sex and love;

And, when I'd had him from his fair Olivia,

And this bright world of artful beauties here,
Might then have hoped, he would have look'd on me,
Amongst the sooty Indians ; and I could,
To choose, there live his wife, where wives are forced
To live no longer when their husbands die ;
Nay, what's yet worse, to share 'em whilst they live
With many rival wives. But here he comes,
And I must yet keep out of his sight, not
To lose it for ever.

[Exit.]

Re-enter MANLY and FREEMAN.

Free. But pray what strange charms has she that could make you love ?

Man. Strange charms indeed ! She is so perfect a beauty, that art could not better it, nor affection deform it. Yet all this is nothing. Her tongue as well as face ne'er knew artifice ; nor ever did her words or looks contradict her heart. She is all truth, and hates the lying, masking, daubing world, as I do ; for which I love her, and for which I think she dislikes not me. For she has often shut out of her conversation for mine, the gaudy fluttering parrots of the town, apes and echoes of men only, and refused their common-place pert chat, flattery and submissions, to be entertained with my sullen bluntness, and honest love ; and, last of all, swore to me, since her parents would not suffer her to go with me, she would stay behind for no other man ; but follow me without their leave, if not to be obtained. Which oath—

Free. Did you think she would keep ?

Man. Yes ; for she is not (I tell you) like other women, but can keep her promise, though she has sworn to keep it. But, that she might the better keep it, I left her the value of five or six thousand pounds ; for women's wants are generally the most importunate solicitors to love or marriage.

Free. And money summons lovers more than beauty, and augments but their importunity, and their number ; so makes it the harder for a woman to deny 'em. For my part, I am for the French maxim :—*If you would have your female subjects loyal, keep 'em poor.*—But, in short, that your mistress may not marry, you have given her a portion.

Man. She had given me her heart first, and I am satisfied with the security ; I can never doubt her truth and constancy.

Free. It seems you do, since you are fain to bribe it with money. But how come you to be so diffident of the man that says he loves you, and not doubt the woman that says it ?

Man. I should, I confess, doubt the love of any other woman but her, as I do the friendship of any other man but him I have trusted ; but I have such proofs of their faith as cannot deceive me.

Free. Cannot !

Man. Not but I know that generally no man can be a great enemy but under the name of friend ; and if you are cheated in your

fortune, 'tis your friend that does it, for your enemy is not made your trustee : if your honour or good name be injured, 'tis your friend that does it still, because your enemy is not believed against you. Therefore, I rather choose to go where honest, downright barbarity is professed, where men devour one another like generous hungry lions and tigers, not like crocodiles ; where they think the devil white, of our complexion ; and I am already so far an Indian. But if your weak faith doubts this miracle of a woman, come along with me, and believe ; and thou wilt find her so handsome, that thou, who art so much my friend, wilt have a mind to discover what her faith and thine is to me.

When we're in love, the great adversity,
Our friends and mistresses at once we try. [Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—OLIVIA'S Lodging.

Enter OLIVIA, ELIZA and LETTICE.

Oliv. Ah, cousin, what a world 'tis we live in ! I am so weary of it.

Eliza. Truly, cousin, I can find no fault with it, but that we cannot always live in't, for I can never be weary of it.

Oliv. O hideous ! you cannot be in earnest sure, when you say you like the filthy world.

Eliza. You cannot be in earnest, sure, when you say you dislike it.

Oliv. You are a very censorious creature, I find.

Eliza. I must confess, I think we women as often discover where we love by railing, as men when they lie by their swearing ; and the world is but a constant keeping gallant, whom we fail not to quarrel with when anything crosses us, yet cannot part with't for our hearts.

Let. A gallant indeed, madam, whom ladies first make jealous, and then quarrel with it for being so ; for if, by her indiscretion, a lady be talked of for a man, she cries presently, '*Tis a censorious world !* if by her vanity the intrigue be found out, '*Tis a prying malicious world !* if by her over-fondness the gallant proves unconstant, '*Tis a false world !* and if by her niggardliness the chamber-maid tells, '*Tis a perfidious world !* But that I'm sure, your ladyship cannot say of the world yet, as bad as 'tis.

Oliv. But I may say, '*Tis a very impertinent world !*—Hold your peace.—And, cousin, if the world be a gallant, 'tis such a one as is my aversion. Pray name it no more.

Eliza. But is it possible the world, which has such variety of charms for other women, can have none for you ? Let's see—first, what d'ye think of dressing and fine clothes ?

Oliv. Dressing ! Fy, fy, 'tis my aversion.—[To LETTICE.] But come hither, you dowdy ; methinks you might have opened this toure better ; O hideous ! I cannot suffer it ! D'ye see how't sits ?

Eliza. Well enough, cousin, if dressing be your aversion.

Oliv. 'Tis so; and for variety of rich clothes, they are more my aversion.

Let. Ay, 'tis because your ladyship wears 'em too long; for indeed a gown, like a gallant, grows one's aversion by having too much of it.

Oliv. Insatiable creature! I'll be sworn I have had this not above three days, cousin, and within this month have made some six more.

Eliza. Then your aversion to 'em is not altogether so great.

Oliv. Alas! 'tis for my woman only I wear 'em, cousin.

Let. If it be for me only, madam, pray do not wear 'em.

Eliza. But what d'ye think of visits—balls?

Oliv. Oh, I detest 'em!

Eliza. Of plays?

Oliv. I abominate 'em; filthy, obscene, hideous things!

Eliza. What say you to masquerading in the winter, and Hyde-park in the summer?

Oliv. Insipid pleasures I taste not.

Eliza. Nay, if you are for more solid pleasures, what think you of a rich young husband?

Oliv. O horrid! marriage! what a pleasure you have found out! I nauseate it of all things.

Let. But what does your ladyship think then of a liberal handsome young lover?

Eliza. A handsome young fellow, you impudent! begone out of my sight. Name a handsome young fellow to me! foh! a hideous handsome young fellow I abominate! [Spits.]

Eliza. Indeed! but let's see—will nothing please you? what d'ye think of the Court?

Oliv. How, the Court! the Court, cousin! my aversion, my aversion, my aversion of all aversions!

Eliza. How, the Court! where—

Oliv. Where sincerity is a quality as much out of fashion and as unprosperous as bashfulness: I could not laugh at a quibble, though it were a fat privy councillor's, nor praise a lord's ill verses, though I were myself the subject; nor an old lady's young looks, though I were her woman; nor sit to a vain young smile-maker, though he flattered me. In short, I could not glout upon a man when he comes into a room, and laugh at him when he goes out; I cannot rail at the absent to flatter the standers-by; I—

Eliza. Well, but railing now is so common, that 'tis no more malice, but the fashion; and the absent think they are no more the worse for being railed at, than the present think they're the better for being flattered. And for the Court—

Oliv. Nay, do not defend the Court; for you'll make me rail at it like a trusting citizen's widow.

Eliza. Or like a Holborn lady, who could not get in to the last ball, or was out of countenance in the drawing-room the last Sunday

of her appearance there. For none rail at the Court but those who cannot get into it, or else who are ridiculous when they are there; and I shall suspect you were laughed at when you were last there, or would be a maid of honour.

Oliv. I a maid of honour! To be a maid of honour were yet of all things my aversion.

Eliza. In what sense am I to understand you? But, in fine, by the word aversion, I'm sure you dissemble; for I never knew woman yet used it who did not. Come, our tongues belie our hearts more than our pocket-glasses do our faces. But methinks we ought to leave off dissembling, since 'tis grown of no use to us; for all wise observers understand us now-a-days, as they do dreams, almanacks, and Dutch gazettes, by the contrary; and a man no more believes a woman, when she says she has an aversion for him, than when she says she'll cry out.

Oliv. O filthy! hideous! Peace, cousin, or your discourse will be my aversion; and you may believe me.

Eliza. Yes; for if anything be a woman's aversion, 'tis plain dealing from another woman; and perhaps that's your quarrel to the world; for that will talk, as your woman says.

Oliv. Talk? not of me sure; for what men do I converse with? what visits do I admit?

Enter BOY.

Boy. Here's the gentleman to wait upon you, madam.

Oliv. On me! you little unthinking fop; d'ye know what you say?

Boy. Yes, madam, 'tis the gentleman that comes every day to you, who——

Oliv. Hold your peace, you heedless little animal, and get you gone.—[*Exit BOY.*] This country boy, cousin, takes my dancing-master, tailor, or the spruce milliner, for visitors.

Let. No, madam; 'tis Mr. Novel, I'm sure, by his talking so loud: I know his voice too, madam.

Oliv. You know nothing, you baffle-headed stupid creature you: you would make my cousin believe I receive visits. But if it be Mr.—— what did you call him?

Let. Mr. Novel, madam; he that——

Oliv. Hold your peace; I'll hear no more of him. But if it be your Mr.—— (I cannot think of his name again) I suppose he has followed my cousin hither.

Eliza. No, cousin, I will not rob you of the honour of the visit: 'tis to you, cousin; for I know him not.

Oliv. Nor did I ever hear of him before, upon my honour, cousin; besides, han't I told you, that visits, and the business of visits flattery and detraction, are my aversion? D'ye think then I would admit such a coxcomb as he is? who rather than not rail, will rail at the dead, whom none speak ill of; rather than not flatter, will flatter the poets of the age, whom none will flatter; who affects novelty as much as the fashion, and is as fantastical as changeable, and as

well known as the fashion ; who likes nothing but what is new, nay, would choose to have his friend or his title a new one. In fine, he is my aversion.

Eliza. I find you do know him, cousin ; at least, have heard of him.

Oliv. Yes, now I remember, I have heard of him.

Eliza. Well ; but since he is such a coxcomb, for heaven's sake, let him not come up. Tell him, Mrs. Lettice, your lady is not within.

Oliv. No, Lettice, tell him my cousin is here, and that he may come up. For notwithstanding I detest the sight of him, you may like his conversation ; and though I would use him scurvily, I will not be rude to you in my own lodging : since he has followed you hither, let him come up, I say.

Eliza. Very fine ! pray let him go, I say, for me : I know him not, nor desire it. Send him away, Mrs. Lettice.

Oliv. Upon my word, she shan't : I must disobey your commands, to comply with your desires. Call him up, Lettice.

Eliza. Nay, 'I'll swear she shall not stir on that errand.

[Holds LETTICE.

Oliv. Well then, I'll call him myself for you, since you will have it so.—[Calls out at the door.] Mr. Novel, sir, sir !

Enter NOVEL.

Nov. Madam, I beg your pardon ; perhaps you were busy : I did not think you had company with you.

Eliza. Yet he comes to me, cousin !

[Aside to OLIVIA.

Oliv. Chairs there.

[They sit.

Nov. Well ; but, madam, d'ye know whence I come now ?

Oliv. From some melancholy place, I warrant, sir, since they have lost your good company.

Eliza. So !

Nov. From a place where they have treated me at dinner with so much civility and kindness, a plague on them ! that I could hardly get away to you, dear madam.

Oliv. You have a way with you so new and obliging, sir !

Eliza. You hate flattery, cousin !

[Apart to OLIVIA.

Nov. Nay, faith, madam, d'ye think my way new ? Then you are obliging, madam. I must confess, I hate imitation, to do anything like other people. All that know me do me the honour to say, I am an original, faith. But, as I was saying, madam, I have been treated to-day with all the ceremony and kindness imaginable at my Lady Autumn's. But, the nauseous old woman at the upper end of her table—

Oliv. Revives the old Grecian custom, of serving in a death's head with their banquets.

Nov. Ha ! ha ! fine, just, i'faith, nay, and new. 'Tis like eating with the ghost in the *Libertine* : she would frighten a man from her dinner with her hollow invitation, and spoil one's stomach—

Oliv. To meat or women. I detest her hollow cherry cheeks: she looks like an old coach new painted; affecting an unseemly smugness, whilst she is ready to drop in pieces.

Eliza. You hate detraction, I see, cousin. [*Apart to OLIVIA.*

Nov. But the silly old fury, whilst she affects to look like a woman of this age, talks——

Oliv. Like one of the last; and as passionately as an old courtier who has outlived his office.

Nov. Yes, madam; but pray let me give you her character. Then she never counts her age by the years, but——

Oliv. By the masques she has lived to see.

Nov. Nay then, madam, I see you think a little harmless railing too great a pleasure for any but yourself; and therefore I've done.

Oliv. Nay, faith, you shall tell me who you had there at dinner.

Nov. If you would hear me, madam.

Oliv. Most patiently; speak, sir.

Nov. Then, we had her daughter——

Oliv. Ay, her daughter; the very disgrace to good clothes, which she always wears but to heighten her deformity, not mend it; for she is still most splendidly, gallantly ugly, and looks like an ill piece of daubing in a rich frame.

Nov. So! But have you done with her, madam? and can you spare her to me a little now?

Oliv. Ay, ay, sir.

Nov. Then, she is like——

Oliv. She is, you'd say, like a city bride; the greater fortune, but not the greater beauty, for her dress.

Nov. Well: yet have you done, madam? Then she——

Oliv. Then, she bestows as unfortunately on her face all the graces in fashion, as the languishing eye, the hanging or pouting lip. But as the fool is never more provoking than when he aims at wit, the ill-favoured of our sex are never more nauseous than when they would be beauties, adding to their natural deformity the artificial ugliness of affectation.

Eliza. So, cousin, I find one may have a collection of all one's acquaintance's pictures as well at your house as at Mr. Lely's. Only the difference is, there we find 'em much handsomer than they are, and like; here much uglier, and like; and you are the first of the profession of picture-drawing I ever knew without flattery.

Oliv. I draw after the life; do nobody wrong, cousin.

Eliza. No, you hate flattery and detraction.

Oliv. But, Mr. Novel, who had you besides at dinner?

Nov. Nay, the devil take me if I tell you, unless you will allow me the privilege of railing in my turn.—But, now I think on't, the women ought to be your province, as the men are mine; and you must know we had him whom——

Oliv. Him, whom——

Nov. What, invading me already? and giving the character before you know the man?

El'za. No, that is not fair, though it be usual.

Oliv. I beg your pardon, Mr. Novel ; pray go on.

Nov. Then, I say, we had that familiar coxcomb who is at home wheresoe'er he comes.

Oliv. Ay, that fool——

Nov. Nay then, madam, your servant ; I'm gone. Taking the fool out of one's mouth is worse than taking the bread out of one's mouth.

Oliv. I've done ; your pardon, Mr. Novel : pray proceed.

Nov. I say, the rogue, that he may be the only wit in company, will let nobody else talk, and——

Oliv. Ay, those fops who love to talk all themselves are of all things my aversion.

Nov. Then you'll let me speak, madam, sure. The rogue, I say, will force his jest upon you ; and I hate a jest that's forced upon a man, as much as a glass.

Eliza. Why, I hope, sir, he does not expect a man of your temperance in jesting should do him reason ?

Nov. What ! interruption from this side too ? I must then——

[*Offers to rise.* OLIVIA holds him.]

Oliv. No, sir.—You must know, cousin, that fop he means, though he talks only to be commended, will not give you leave to do't.

Nov. But, madam——

Oliv. He a wit ! Hang him ; he's only an adopter of straggling jests and fatherless lampoons ; by the credit of which he eats at good tables, and so, like the barren beggar-woman, lives by borrowed children.

Nov. Madam——

Oliv. And never was author of anything but his news ; but that is still all his own.

Nov. Madam, pray——

Oliv. An eternal babbler ; and makes no more use of his ears, than a man that sits at a play by his mistress, or in Fop-corner. He's, in fine, a base detracting fellow, and is my aversion.—But who else, prithee Mr. Novel, was there with you ? Nay, you shan't stir.

Nov. I beg your pardon, madam ; I cannot stay in any place where I'm not allowed a little Christian liberty of railing.

Oliv. Nay, prithee Mr. Novel, stay ; and though you should rail at me, I would hear you with patience. Prithee, who else was there with you ?

Nov. Your servant, madam.

Oliv. Nay, prithee tell us, Mr. Novel, prithee do.

Nov. We had nobody else.

Oliv. Nay, faith, I know you had. Come, my Lord Plausible was there too ; who is, cousin, a——

Eliza. You need not tell me what he is, cousin ; for I know him to be a civil, good-natured, harmless gentleman, that speaks well of all the world, and is always in good humour ; and——

Oliv. Hold, cousin, hold ; I hate detraction. But I must tell you, cousin, his civility is cowardice, his good nature want of wit ; and he has neither courage nor sense to rail ; and for his being always in humour, 'tis because he is never dissatisfied with himself. In fine, he is my aversion ; and I never admit his visits beyond my hall.

Nov. No, he visit you ! The cringing, grinning rogue ! if I should see him coming up to you, I would make bold to kick him down again.—Ha !

Enter my LORD PLAUSIBLE.

My dear lord, your most humble servant.

[Rises and salutes PLAUSIBLE, and kisses him.]

Eliza. So, I find kissing and railing succeed each other with the angry men as well as with the angry women ; and their quarrels are like love-quarrels, since absence is the only cause of them ; for as soon as the man appears again, they are over. *[Aside.]*

Plaus. Your most faithful humble servant, generous Mr. Novel. And, madam, I am your eternal slave, and kiss your fair hands ; which I had done sooner, according to your commands, but——

Oliv. No excuses, my lord.

Eliza. What, you sent for him, then, cousin ? *[Apart to OLIVIA.]*

Nov. Ha ! invited !

[Aside.]

Oliv. I know you must divide yourself ; for your good company is too general a good to be engrossed by any particular friend.

Plaus. O lord, madam, my company ! your most obliged, faithful, humble servant. But I could have brought you good company indeed ; for I parted at your door with two of the worthiest, bravest men——

Oliv. Who were they, my lord ?

Nov. Who do you call the worthiest, bravest men, pray ?

Plaus. O, the wisest, bravest gentlemen ! men of such honour and virtue ! of such good qualities ? ah !——

Eliza. This is a coxcomb that speaks ill of all people a different way, and libels everybody with dull praise, and commonly in the wrong place ; so makes his panegyrics abusive lampoons. *[Aside.]*

Oliv. But pray let me know who they were ?

Plaus. Ah ! such patterns of heroic virtue ! such——

Nov. Well ; but who were they ?

Plaus. The honour of our nation ! the glory of our age ! Ah, I could dwell a twelvemonth on their praise ; which indeed I might spare by telling their names ; Sir John Current and Sir Richard Court-Title.

Nov. Court-Title ! ha ! ha !

Oliv. And Sir John Current ! Why will you keep such a wretch company, my lord ?

Plaus. O madam, seriously you are a little too severe ; for he is a man of unquestioned reputation in everything.

Oliv. Yes, because he endeavours only with the women to pass for a man of courage, and with the bullies for a wit ; with the wits

for a man of business, and with the men of business for a favourite at Court; and at Court for city security.

Nov. And for Sir Richard, he——

Plaus. He loves your choice picked company, persons that——

Oliv. He loves a lord indeed; but——

No v. Pray, dear madam, let me have but a bold stroke or two at his picture. He loves a lord, as you say, though——

Oliv. Though he borrowed his money, and ne'er paid him again.

Nov. And would bespeak a place three days before at the back-end of a lord's coach to Hyde Park.

Plaus. Nay, i'faith, i'faith, you are both too severe.

Oliv. Then to show yet more his passion for quality, he makes love to that fulsome coach-load of honour, my Lady Goodly, for he's always at her lodging.

Plaus. Because it is the conventicle-gallant, the meeting-house of all the fair ladies, and glorious superfine beauties of the town.

Nov. Very fine ladies! there's first——

Oliv. Her honour, as fat as a hostess.

Plaus. She is something plump indeed, a goodly, comely, graceful person.

Nov. Then there's my lady Frances—what d'ye call her? as ugly——

Oliv. As a citizen's lawfully begotten daughter.

Plaus. She has wit in abundance, and the handsomest heel, elbow, and tip of an ear you ever saw.

Nov. Heel and elbow! ha! ha! And there's my lady Betty, you know——

Oliv. As sluttish and slatternly as an Irish woman bred in France.

Plaus. Ah! all she has hangs with a loose air indeed, and becoming negligence.

Eliza. You see all faults with lovers' eyes, I find, my lord.

Plaus. Ah, madam, your most obliged, faithful, humble servant to command! But you can say nothing sure against the superfine mistress——

Oliv. I know who you mean. She is as censorious and detracting a jade as a superannuated sinner.

Plaus. She has a smart way of raillery, 'tis confessed.

Nov. And then for Mrs. Grideline——

Plaus. She, I'm sure, is——

Oliv. One that never spoke ill of anybody, 'tis confessed. For she is as silent in conversation as a country lover, and no better company than a clock, or a weather-glass; for if she sounds, 'tis but once an hour to put you in mind of the time of day, or to tell you 'twill be cold or hot, rain or snow.

Plaus. Ah, poor creature! she's extremely good and modest.

Nov. And for Mrs. Bridlechin, she's——

Oliv. As proud as a churchman's wife.

Plaus. She's a woman of great spirit and honour, and will not make herself cheap, 'tis true.

Nov. Then Mrs. Hoyden, that calls all people by their surnames, and is——

Oliv. As familiar a duck——

Nov. As an actress in the tiring-room. There I was once beforehand with you, madam.

Plaus. Mrs. Hoyden! a poor, affable, good-natured soul. But the divine Mrs. Trifle comes thither too. Sure her beauty, virtue, and conduct, you can say nothing to.

Oliv. No!

Nov. No!—Pray let me speak, madam.

Oliv. First, can any one be called beautiful that squints?

Plaus. Her eyes languish a little, I own.

Nov. Languish! ha! ha!

Oliv. Languish!—Then, for her conduct, she was seen at the *Country Wife** after the first day. There's for you, my lord.

Plaus. But, madam, she was not seen to use her fan all the play long, turn aside her head, or by a conscious blush discover more guilt than modesty.

Oliv. Very fine! Then you think a woman modest that sees the hideous *Country Wife* without blushing, or publishing her detestation of it? D'ye hear him, cousin?

Eliza. Yes, and am, I must confess, something of his opinion; and think, that as an over-conscious fool at a play, by endeavouring to show the author's want of wit, exposes his own to more censure, so may a lady call her own modesty in question, by publicly cavilling with the poet's. For all those grimaces of honour and artificial modesty disparage a woman's real virtue, as much as the use of white and red does the natural complexion; and you must use very, very little, if you would have it thought your own.

Oliv. Then you would have a woman of honour with passive looks, ears, and tongue, undergo all the hideous obscenity she hears at nasty plays.

Eliza. Truly, I think a woman betrays her want of modesty, by showing it publicly in a playhouse, as much as a man does his want of courage by a quarrel there; for the truly modest and stout say least, and are least exceptionous, especially in public.

Oliv. O hideous, cousin! thi; cannot be your opinion. But you are one of those who have the confidence to pardon the filthy play.

Eliza. Why, what is there of ill in't, say you?

Oliv. O fy! fy! fy! would you put me to the blush anew? call all the blood into my face again? But to satisfy you then; first, the clandestine obscenity in the very name of *Horner*.

Eliza. Truly, 'tis so hidden I cannot find it out, I confess.

Oliv. O horrid! Does it not give you the rank conception or image of a goat, or town-bull, or a satyr?

* A Play of Wycherley's.

Eliza. What then? I can think of a goat, a bull, or a satyr, without any hurt.

Oliv. Ay; but cousin, one cannot stop there.

Eliza. I can, cousin.

Oliv. O no; for when you have those filthy creatures in your head once, the next thing you think, is what they do. Nay, further——

Eliza. Nay, no farther, cousin. We have enough of your comment on the play, which will make me more ashamed than the play itself.

Oliv. O, believe me, 'tis a filthy play! and you may take my word for a filthy play as soon as another's. But the filthiest thing in that play, or any other play, is——

Eliza. Pray keep it to yourself, if it be so.

Oliv. No, faith, you shall know it; I'm resolved to make you out of love with the play. I say, the lewdest, filthiest thing is his *china*; nay, I will never forgive the beastly author his *china*. He has quite taken away the reputation of poor china itself, and sullied the most innocent and pretty furniture of a lady's chamber; inso-much that I was fain to break all my defiled vessels. You see I have none left; nor you, I hope.

Eliza. You'll pardon me, I cannot think the worse of my china for that of the playhouse.

Oliv. Why, you will not keep any now, sure! 'Tis now as unfit an ornament for a lady's chamber as the pictures that come from Italy and other hot countries; as appears by their nudities, which I always cover, or scratch out, wheresoe'er I find 'em. But china! out upon't, filthy china! nasty, debauched china!

Eliza. All this will not put me out of conceit with china, nor the play, which is acted to-day, or another of the same beastly author's, as you call him, which I'll go see.

Oliv. You will not, sure! nay, you shall not venture your reputation by going, and mine by leaving me alone with two men here: nay, you'll disoblige me for ever, if——

[Pulls her back.

Eliza. I stay!—your servant.

[Exit.

Oliv. But what think you, Mr. Novel, of the play? though I know you are a friend to all that are new.

Nov. Faith, madam, I must confess, the new plays would not be the worse for my advice, but I could never get the silly rogues, the poets, to mind what I say; but I'll tell you what counsel I gave the surly fool you spake of.

Oliv. What was't?

Nov. Faith, to put his play into rhyme; for rhyme, you know, often makes mystical nonsense pass with the critics for wit, and a double-meaning saying with the ladies, for soft, tender, and moving passion. But now I talk of passion, I saw your old lover this morning—Captain——

[Whispers.

Enter MANLY, FREEMAN, and FIDELIA, standing behind.

Oliv. Whom?—nay, you need not whisper.

Man. We are luckily got hither unobserved. How! in a close conversation with these supple rascals, the outcasts of sempstresses' shops!

Free. Faith, pardon her, captain, that, since she could no longer be entertained with your manly bluntness and honest love, she takes up with the pert chat and common-place flattery of these fluttering parrots of the town, apes and echoes of men only.

Man. Do not you, sir, play the echo too, mock me, dally with my own words, and show yourself as impertinent as they are.

Free. Nay, captain——

Fid. Nay, lieutenant, do not excuse her; methinks she looks very kindly upon 'em both, and seems to be pleased with what that fool there says to her.

Man. You lie, sir! and hold your peace, that I may not be provoked to give you a worse reply.

Oliv. Manly returned, d'ye say! and is he safe?

Nov. My lord saw him too.—Hark you, my lord.

[*Whispers to* PLAUSIBLE.]

Man. She yet seems concerned for my safety, and perhaps they are admitted now here but for their news of me: for intelligence indeed is the common passport of nauseous fools, when they go their round of good tables and houses.

[*Aside.*

Oliv. I heard of his fighting only, without particulars, and confess I always loved his brutal courage, because it made me hope it might rid me of his more brutal love.

Man. What's that?

[*Aside.*

Oliv. But is he at last returned, d'ye say, unhurt?

Nov. Ay, faith, without doing his business; for the rogue has been these two years pretending to a wooden leg, which he would take from fortune, as kindly as the staff of a marshal of France, and rather read his name in a gazette——

Oliv. Than in the entail of a good estate.

Man. So!

[*Aside.*

Nov. I have an ambition, I must confess, of losing my heart before such a fair enemy as yourself, madam; but that silly rogues should be ambitious of losing their arms, and——

Oliv. Looking like a pair of compasses.

Nov. But he has no use of his arms but to set 'em on kimbow, for he never pulls off his hat, at least not to me, I'm sure; for you must know, madam, he has a fanatical hatred to good company: he can't abide me.

Plaus. O, be not so severe to him, as to say he hates good company; for I assure you he has a great respect, esteem and kindness for me.

Man. That kind, civil rogue has spoken yet ten thousand times worse of me than t'other.

[*Aside.*

Oliv. Well, if he be returned, Mr. Novel, then shall I be pestered again with his boisterous sea-love ; have my alcove smell like a cabin, my chamber perfumed with his taupaulin Brandenburg ; and hear volleys of brandy-sighs, enough to make a fog in one's room. Foh ! I hate a lover that smells like Thames Street.

Man. [*aside.*] I can bear no longer, and need hear no more.—
[*To OLIVIA.*] But since you have these two pulvillio boxes, these essence-bottles, this pair of musk-cats here, I hope I may venture to come yet nearer you.

Oliv. Overheard us then !

Nov. I hope he heard me not.

[*Aside.*

Plaus. Most noble and heroic captain, your most obliged, faithful, humble servant.

Nov. Dear tar, thy humble servant.

Man. Away !—[*Thrusts NOVEL and PLAUSIBLE on each side.*]
Madam—

Oliv. Nay, I think I have fitted you for listening.

Man. You have fitted me for believing you could not be fickle, though you were young ; could not dissemble love, though 'twas your interest ; nor be vain, though you were handsome ; nor break your promise, though to a parting lover ; nor abuse your best friend, though you had wit ; but I take not your contempt of me worse than your esteem, or civility for these things here, though you know 'em.

Nov. Things !

Plaus. Let the captain rally a little.

Man. Yes, things ! Canst thou be angry, thou thing ?

[*Coming up to NOVEL.*

Nov. No, since my lord says you speak in raillery ; for though your sea-raillery be something rough, yet, I confess, we use one another too as bad every day at Locket's, and never quarrel for the matter.

Plaus. Nay, noble captain, be not angry with him.—A word with you, I beseech you—

[*Whispers to MANLY.*

Oliv. Well, we women, like the rest of the cheats of the world, when our creditors have found us out, and will or can trust no longer, pay debts and satisfy obligations with a quarrel, the kindest present a man can make to his mistress, when he can make no more presents. For oftentimes in love, as at cards, we are forced to play foul, only to give over the game ; and use our lovers like the cards, when we can get no more by them, throw 'em up in a pet upon the first dispute.

[*Aside.*

Man. My lord, all that you have made me know by your whispering, which I knew not before, is, that you have a stinking breath ; there's a secret for your secret.

Plaus. Pshaw ! pshaw !

Man. But, madam, tell me, pray, what was't about this spark could take you ? Was it the merit of his fashionable impudence ; the briskness of his noise, the wit of his laugh, his judgment, or fancy

in his garniture? or was it a well-trimmed glove, or the scent of it, that charmed you?

Nov. Very well, sir: 'gad these sea-captains make nothing of dressing. But let me tell you, sir, a man by his dress, as much as by anything, shows his wit and judgment; nay, and his courage too.

Free. How, his courage, Mr. Novel?

Nov. Why, for example, by red breeches, tucked-up hair or peruke, a greasy broad belt, and now-a-days a short sword.

Man. Thy courage will appear more by thy belt than thy sword, I dare swear.—Then, madam, for this gentle piece of courtesy, this man of tame honour, what could you find in him? Was it his languishing affected tone? his mannerly look? his second-hand flattery? the refuse of the playhouse tiring-rooms? or his slavish obsequiousness in watching at the door of your box at the playhouse, for your hand to your chair? or his jaunty way of playing with your fan? or was it the gunpowder spot on his hand, or the jewel in his ear, that purchased your heart?

Oliv. Good jealous captain, no more of your——

Plaus. No, let him go on, madam, for perhaps he may make you laugh; and I would contribute to your pleasure any way.

Man. Gentle rogue!

Oliv. No, noble captain, you cannot sure think anything could take me more than that heroic title of yours, captain; for you know we women love honour inordinately.

Nov. Ha! ha! faith, she is with thee, bully, for thy raillery.

Man. Faith, so shall I be with you, no bully, for your grinning.

[*Aside to NOVEL.*

Oliv. Then that noble lion-like mien of yours, that soldier-like, weather-beaten complexion, and that manly roughness of your voice; how can they otherwise than charm us women, who hate effeminacy!

Nov. Ha! ha! faith I can't hold from laughing.

Man. Nor shall I from kicking anon. [*Aside to NOVEL.*

Oliv. And then, that captain-like carelessness in your dress, but especially your scarf; 'twas just such another, only a little higher tied, made me in love with my tailor as he passed by my window the last training-day; for we women adore a martial man, and you have nothing wanting to make you more one, or more agreeable, but a wooden leg.

Plaus. Nay, if faith, there your ladyship was a wag, and it was fine, just, and well rallied.

Nov. Ay, ay, madam, with you ladies too, martial men must needs be very killing.

Man. Peace, you Bartholomew-fair buffoons! And be not you vain that these laugh on your side, for they will laugh at their own dull jests; but no more of 'em, for I will only suffer now this lady to be witty and merry.

Oliv. You would not have your panegyric interrupted. I go on then to your humour. Is there anything more agreeable than the

pretty sullenness of that ? than the greatness of your courage, which most of all appears in your spirit of contradiction ? for you dare give all mankind the lie ; and your opinion is your only mistress, for you renounce that too, when it becomes another man's.

Nov. Ha ! ha ! I cannot hold, I must laugh at thee, tar, faith !

Plaus. And i'faith, dear captain, I beg your pardon, and leave to laugh at you too, though I protest I mean you no hurt ; but when a lady rallies, a stander-by must be complaisant, and do her reason in laughing. Ha ! ha !

Man. Why, you impudent, pitiful wretches, you presume sure upon your effeminacy to urge me ; for you are in all things so like women, that you may think it in me a kind of cowardice to beat you.

Oliv. No hectoring, good captain.

Man. Or, perhaps, you think this lady's presence secures you ; but have a care, she has talked herself out of all the respect I had for her ; and by using me ill before you, has given me a privilege of using you so before her ; but if you would preserve your respect to her, and not be beaten before her, go, begone immediately.

Nov. Begone ! what ?

Plaus. Nay, worthy, noble, generous, captain——

Man. Begone, I say !

Nov. Begone again ! to us begone !

Man. No chattering, baboons, instantly begone, or——

[*Puts them out of the room : NOVEL struts, PLAUSIBLE cringes.*]

Nov. Well, madam, we'll go make the cards ready in your bed-chamber : sure you will not stay long with him.

[*Exeunt PLAUSIBLE and NOVEL.*]

Oliv. Turn hither your rage, good Captain Swaggerhuff, and be saucy with your mistress, like a true captain ; but be civil to your rivals and betters, and do not threaten anything but me here ; no, not so much as my windows ; nor do not think yourself in the lodgings of one of your suburb mistresses beyond the Tower.

Man. Do not give me cause to think so ; for those less infamous women part with their lovers, just as you did from me, with unforced vows of constancy and floods of willing tears ; but the same winds bear away their lovers and their vows ; and for their grief, if the credulous unexpected fools return, they find new comforters, such as I found here. The mercenary love of those women too suffers shipwreck with their gallants' fortunes ; now you have heard chance has used me scurvily, therefore you do too. Well, persevere in your ingratitude, falsehood, and disdain ; have constancy in something, and I promise you to be as just to your real scorn as I was to your feigned love ; and henceforward will despise, condemn, hate, loathe, and detest you most faithfully.

Enter LETTICE.

Oliv. Get the ombre-cards ready in the next room, Lettice, and——

[*Whispers to LETTICE, who goes out.*]

Free. Bravely resolved, captain !

Fid. And you'll be sure to keep your word, I hope, sir ?

Man. I hope so too.

Fid. Do you but hope it, sir ? If you are not as good as your word, 'twill be the first time you ever bragged, sure.

Man. She has restored my reason with my heart.

Free. But now you talk of restoring, captain, there are other things, which next to one's heart one would not part with ; I mean your jewels and money, which it seems she has, sir ?

Man. What's that to you, sir ?

Free. Pardon me, whatsoever is yours I have a share in't I'm sure, which I will not lose for asking, though you may be too generous or too angry now to do't yourself.

Fid. Nay, then I'll make bold to make my claim, too.

Man. Hold, you impertinent, officious fops—*[Both going towards OLIVIA. Aside.]* How have I been deceived !

Free. Madam, there are certain appurtenances to a lover's heart, called jewels, which always go along with it.

Fid. And which, with lovers, have no value in themselves, but from the heart they come with. Our captain's, madam, it seems you scorn to keep, and much more will those worthless things without it, I am confident.

Oliv. A gentleman so well made as you are may be confident—us easy women could not deny you anything you ask, if 'twere for yourself ; but, since 'tis for another, I beg your leave to give him my answer.—*[Aside.]* An agreeable young fellow this—and would not be my aversion.—*[Aloud.]* Captain, your young friend here has a very persuading face, I confess ; yet you might have asked me yourself for those trifles you left with me, which (hark you a little, for I dare trust you with the secret ; you are a man of so much honour, I'm sure) I say then, not expecting your return, or hoping ever to see you again, I have delivered your jewels to—

Man. Whom ?

Oliv. My husband.

Man. Your husband ?

Oliv. Ay, my husband. For since you could leave me, I am lately and privately married to one, who is a man of so much honour and experience in the world, that I dare not ask him for your jewels again to restore 'em to you ; lest he should conclude you never would have parted with 'em to me on any other score but the exchange of my honour ; which rather than you'd let me lose, you'd lose I'm sure yourself, those trifles of yours.

Man. Triumphant impudence ! but married too !

Oliv. O, speak not so loud, my servants know it not : I am married ; there's no resisting one's destiny or love, you know.

Man. Why, did you love him too ?

Oliv. Most passionately ; nay, love him now, though I have married him, and he me : which mutual love I hope you are too good,

too generous a man to disturb, by any future claim, or visits to me. 'Tis true, he is now absent in the country, but returns shortly : therefore I beg of you, for your own ease and quiet, and my honour, you will never see me more.

Man. I wish I had never seen you.

Oliv. But if you should ever have anything to say to me hereafter, let that young gentleman there be your messenger.

Man. You would be kinder to him ; I find he should be welcome.

Oliv. Alas ! his youth would keep my husband from suspicions, and his visits from scandal ; for we women may have pity for such as he, but no love ; and I already think you do not well to spirit him away to sea ; and the sea is already but too rich with the spoil of the shore.

Man. True perfect woman ! If I could say anything more injurious to her now, I would ; for I could out-rail a kicked coward ; but now I think on't, that were rather to discover my love than hatred ; and I must not talk, for something I must do. [*Aside.*]

Oliv. I think I have given him enough of me now, never to be troubled with him again. [*Aside.*]

Re-enter LETTICE.

Well, Lettice, are the cards and all ready within ? I come then.—Captain, I beg your pardon : you will not make one at ombre ?

Man. No, madam, but I'll wish you a little good luck before you go.

Oliv. No, if you would have me thrive, curse me : for that you'll do heartily, I suppose.

Man. Then if you will have it so, may all the curses light upon you women ought to fear, and you deserve !—First, may the curse of loving play attend your sordid covetousness, and fortune cheat you, by trusting to her, as you have cheated me ; the curse of pride, or a good reputation, fall on your lust ; the curse of affectation on your beauty ; the curse of your husband's company on your pleasures ; and the curse of scorn, jealousy, or despair on your love ; and then the curse of loving on !

Oliv. And to requite all your curses, I will only return you your last ; may the curse of loving me still fall upon your proud hard heart, that could be so cruel to me in these horrid curses ! but Heaven forgive you ! [*Exit.*]

Free. Well, you see now, mistresses, like friends, are lost by letting 'em handle your money ; and most women are such kind of witches, who can have no power over a man, unless you give 'em money ; but when once they have got any from you, they never leave you till they have all. Therefore I never dare give a woman a farthing.

Man. Well, there is yet this comfort by losing one's money with one's mistress, a man is out of danger of getting another ; of being made prize again by love, who, like a pirate, takes you by spreading

false colours ; but when once you have run your ship aground, the treacherous picaroon loofs ; so by your ruin you save yourself from slavery at least.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Mrs. Lettice, here's Madam Blackacre come to wait upon her honour.

[*Exeunt LETTICE and BOY.*]

Man. D'ye hear that ? Let us begone before she comes : for henceforward I'll avoid the whole sex for ever, and woman as a sinking ship.

[*Exeunt MANLY and FIDELIA.*]

Free. And I'll stay, to revenge on her your quarrel to the sex ; for out of love to her jointure, and hatred to business, I would marry her, to make an end of her thousand suits, and my thousand engagements, to the comfort of two unfortunate sort of people, my plaintiffs and her defendants, my creditors and her adversaries.

Enter WIDOW BLACKACRE, led in by MAJOR OLDFOX, and JERRY BLACKACRE following, laden with green bags.

Wid. 'Tis an arrant sea-ruffian ; but I am glad I met with him at last, to serve him again, major ; for the last service was not good in law. Boy, duck, Jerry, where is my paper of memorandums ? Give me, child : so. Where is my cousin Olivia now, my kind relation ?

Free. Here is one that would be your kind relation, madam.

Wid. What mean you, sir ?

Free. Why, faith (to be short), to marry you, widow.

Wid. Is not this the wild, rude person we saw at Captain Manly's ?

Jer. Ay, forsooth, an't please.

Wid. What would you ? What are you ? Marry me !

Free. Ay, faith ; for I am a younger brother, and you are a widow.

Wid. You are an impertinent person ; and go about your business.

Free. I have none, but to marry thee, widow.

Wid. But I have other business, I'd have you to know.

Free. But I'll make you pleasanter business than any you have ; for the business, widow——

Wid. Go, I'm sure you're an idle fellow.

Free. Try me but, widow, and employ me as you find my abilities and industry.

Old. Pray be civil to the lady, Mr. —— ; she is a person of quality, a person that is no person——

Free. Yes, but she's a person that is a widow. Be you mannerly to her, because you are to pretend only to be her squire, to arm her to her lawyer's chambers ; but I will be impudent ; for she must love and marry me.

Wid. Marry come up, you saucy familiar Jack ! Gad forgive me ! now-a-days, every idle, young, hectoring, roaring companion, with a pair of turned red breeches, and a broad back, thinks to

carry away any widow of the best degree. But I'd have you to know, sir, all widows are not got, like places at Court, by impudence and importunity only.

Old. No, no, soft, soft, you are a young man, and not fit——

Free. For a widow? yes sure, old man, the fitter.

Old. Go to, go to; if others had not laid in their claims before you——

Free. Not you, I hope.

Old. Why not I, sir? sure I am a much more proportionable match for her than you, sir; I, who am an elder brother, of a comfortable fortune, and of equal years with her.

Wid. How's that, you unmannerly person? I'd have you to know, I was born in *Ann' undec' Caroli prim'*.

Old. Your pardon, lady, your pardon; be not offended with your very humble servant—But, I say, sir, you are a beggarly younger brother, twenty years younger than her, without any land or stock, but your great stock of impudence; therefore what pretension can you have to her?

Free. You have made it for me; first, because I am a younger brother.

Wid. Why, is that a sufficient plea to a relict? how appears it, sir? by what foolish custom?

Free. By custom time out of mind only. Then, sir, because I have nothing to keep me after her death, I am the likelier to take care of her life. And for my being twenty years younger than her, and having a sufficient stock of impudence, I leave it to her whether they will be valid exceptions to me in her widow's law or equity.

Old. Well, she has been so long in Chancery, that I'll stand to her equity and decree between us. Come, lady, pray snap up this young snap at first, or we shall be troubled with him. Give him a city-widow's answer, that is, with all the ill-breeding imaginable.—
[*Aside to the Widow.*] Come, madam.

Wid. Well then, to make an end of this foolish wooing, for nothing interrupts business more; first, for you, major——

Old. You declare in my favour, then?

Free. What, direct the court! Come, young lawyer, thou shalt be a counsel for me. [To JERRY.]

Jer. Gad, I shall betray your cause then, as well as an older lawyer; never stir.

Wid. First, I say, for you, major, my walking hospital of an ancient foundation! thou bag of mummy, that wouldst fall asunder, if 'twere not for cerecloths——

Old. How, lady!

Free. Ha! ha!——

Jer. Hey, brave mother! use all suitors thus, for my sake.

Wid. Thou withered, hobbling, distorted cripple; nay, thou art a cripple all over; wouldst thou make me the staff of thy age, the crutch of thy decrepitness? me——

Free. Well said, widow! Faith, thou wouldst make a man love thee now, without dissembling.

Wid. Thou senseless, impertinent, quibbling, drivelling, feeble, paralytic, nincompoop!

Fer. Hey, brave mother, for calling of names, i'fac!

Wid. Wouldst thou make a caudle-maker, a nurse of me? can't you be bedrid without a bedfellow? won't your swan-skins, furs, flannels, and the scorched trencher keep you warm there? would you have me your Scotch warming-pan! me——

Old. O heavens!

Free. I told you I should be thought the fitter man, major.

Fer. Ay, you old fobus, and you would have been my guardian, would you, to have taken care of my estate, that half of't should never come to me, by letting long leases at peppercorn rents?

Wid. If I would have married an old man, 'tis well known I might have married an earl, nay, what's more, a judge, and been covered the winter nights with the lamb-skins, which I prefer to the ermines of nobles. And dost thou think I would wrong my poor minor there for you?

Free. Your minor is a chopping minor, God bless him!

[*Strokes* JERRY on the head.]

Old. Your minor may be a major of horse or foot, for his bigness; and it seems you will have the cheating of your minor to yourself.

Wid. Pray, sir, bear witness;—cheat my minor! I'll bring my action of the case for the slander.

Free. Nay I would bear false witness for thee now, widow, since you have done me justice, and have thought me the fitter man for you.

Wid. Fair and softly, sir, 'tis my minor's case, more than my own; and I must do him justice now on you.

Free. How!

Old. So then.

Wid. You are, first (I warrant), some renegado from the inns of court and the law; and thou'lt come to suffer for't by the law, that is, be hanged.

Fer. Not about your neck, forsooth, I hope.

Free. But, madam——

Old. Hear the Court.

Wid. Thou art some debauched, drunken, lewd, hectoring, gaming companion, and wantest some widow's old gold to nick upon; but I thank you, sir, that's for my lawyers.

Free. Faith, we should ne'er quarrel about that; for guineas would serve my turn. But, widow——

Wid. Thou art a foul-mouthed boaster, a mere braggadocio, and wilt belie thyself more than thou dost women, and art every way a base deceiver of women; and would deceive me too, would you?

Free. Nay, faith, widow, this is judging without seeing the evidence.

Wid. I say, you are worn-out at five-and-twenty, both in body

and fortune ; and in fine, you are a cheating, cozening spendthrift ; and having sold your own annuity, would waste my jointure.

Jer. And make havoc of our estate personal, and all our gilt plate ; I should soon be picking up all our mortgaged apostle-spoons, bowls, and beakers, out of most of the ale-houses betwixt Hercules-pillars and the Boatswain in Wapping ; nay, and you'd be scouring amongst my trees, and make 'em knock down one another, like routed, reeling watchmen at midnight ; would you so, bully ?

Free. Nay, prithee, widow, hear me.

Wid. No, sir ; I'd have you to know, thou pitiful, paltry, lath-backed fellow, if I would have married a young man, 'tis well known I could have had any young heir in Norfolk, nay, the hopefullest young man this day at the King's-bench bar ; I that am a relict and executrix of known plentiful assets and parts, who understand myself and the law. And would you have me under covert-baron again ? No, sir, no covert-baron for me.

Free. But, dear widow, hear me. I value you only, not your jointure.

Wid. Nay, sir, hold there ; I know your love to a widow is covetousness of her jointure ; and a widow a little stricken in years, with a good jointure, is like an old mansion-house in a good purchase, never valued, but take one, take t'other ; and perhaps, when you are in possession, you'd neglect it, let it drop to the ground, for want of necessary repairs or expenses upon't.

Free. No, widow, one would be sure to keep all tight, when one is to forfeit one's lease by dilapidation.

Wid. Fie, fie ! I neglect my business with this foolish discourse of love. Jerry, child, let me see the list of the jury ; I'm sure my cousin Olivia has some relations amongst them. But where is she ?

Free. Nay, widow, but hear me one word only.

Wid. Nay, sir, no more, pray. I will no more hearken to your foolish love-motions, than to offers of arbitration.

[*Exeunt WIDOW and JERRY.*]

Free. Well, I'll follow thee yet ; for he that has a pretension at Court, or to a widow, must never give over for a little ill-usage.

Old. Therefore, I'll get her by assiduity, patience, and long sufferings, which you will not undergo ; for you idle young fellows leave off love when it comes to be business ; and industry gets more women than love.

Free. Ay, industry, the fool's and old man's merit.—But I'll be industrious too, and make a business on't, and get her by law, wrangling, and contests, and not by sufferings ; and, because you are no dangerous rival, I'll give thee counsel, major :—

If you litigious widow e'er would gain,

Sigh not to her, but by the law complain.

Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Westminster Hall.**Enter MANLY and FREEMAN, two SAILORS behind.*

Man. I hate this place worse than a man that has inherited a chancery suit : I wish I were well out on't again.

Free. Why, you need not be afraid of this place ; for a man without money needs no more fear a crowd of lawyers than a crowd of pickpockets.

Man. This, the reverend of the law would have thought the palace or residence of Justice ; but, if it be, she lives here with the state of a Turkish emperor, rarely seen ; and besieged rather than defended by her numerous black-guard here.

Free. Methinks 'tis like one of their own halls in Christmas time, whither from all parts fools bring their money, to try by the dice (not the worst judges) whether it shall be their own or no ; but after a tedious fretting and wrangling, they drop away all their money on both sides ; and, finding neither the better, at last go emptily and lovingly away together to the tavern, joining their curses against the young lawyer's box, that sweeps all, like the old ones.

Man. Spoken like a revelling Christmas lawyer.

Free. Yes, I was one, I confess, but was fain to leave the law, out of conscience, and fall to making false musters : rather choose to cheat the king than his subjects ; plunder rather than take fees.

Man. Well, a plague and a purse-famine light on the law ; and that female limb of it who dragged me hither to-day ! But prithee go see if, in that crowd of daggled gowns there [*pointing to a crowd of LAWYERS at the end of the stage*] thou canst find her.

[*Exit FREEMAN.*]

How hard it is to be a hypocrite !
At least to me, who am but newly so.
I thought it once a kind of knavery,
Nay, cowardice, to hide one's fault ; but now
The common frailty, love, becomes my shame.
He must not know I love the ungrateful still,
Lest he condemn me more than she ; for I,
It seems, can undergo a woman's scorn,
But not a man's——

Enter FIDELIA.

Fid. Sir, good sir, generous captain.

Man. Prithee, kind impertinence, leave me. Why shouldst thou follow me, flatter my generosity now, since thou knowest I have no money left ? if I had it, I'd give it thee, to buy my quiet.

Fid. I never followed yet, sir, reward or fame, but you alone ; nor do I now beg anything but leave to share your miseries. You

should not be a niggard of 'em, since, methinks, you have enough to spare. Let me follow you now, because you hate me, as you have often said.

Man. I ever hated a coward's company, I must confess.

Fid. Let me follow you till I am none, then ; for you, I'm sure, will go through such worlds of dangers, that, I shall be inured to 'em ; nay, I shall be afraid of your anger more than danger, and so turn valiant out of fear. Dear captain, do not cast me off till you have tried me once more ; do not, do not go to sea again without me.

Man. Thou to sea ! to court, thou fool ; remember the advice I gave thee : thou art a handsome spaniel, and canst fawn naturally : go, busk about and run thyself into the next great man's lobby ; first fawn upon the slaves without, and then run into the lady's bedchamber. Go seek, I say, and lose me ; for I am not able to keep thee ; I have not bread for myself.

Fid. Therefore I will not go, because then I may help and serve you.

Man. Thou !

Fid. I warrant you, sir ; for, at worst, I could beg or steal for you.

Man. Nay, more bragging ! Dost thou not know there's venturing your life in stealing ? Go, prithee, away : thou art as hard to shake off as that flattering, effeminating mischief, love.

Fid. Love did you name ? Why, you are not so miserable as to be yet in love, sure ?

Man. No, no, prithee away, begone, or—[*Aside.*] I had almost discovered my love and shame ; well, if I had, that thing could not think the worse of me—or if he did—no—yes, he shall know it—he shall—but then I must never leave him, for they are such secrets that make parasites lords of their masters ; for any slavery or tyranny is easier than love's.—[*Aloud.*] Come hither, since thou art so forward to serve me : hast thou but resolution enough to endure the torture of a secret ? for such to some is insupportable.

Fid. I would keep it as safe as if your dear, precious life depended on't.

Man. Out on your dearness. It concerns more than my life—my honour.

Fid. Doubt it not, sir.

Man. And do not discover it, by too much fear of discovering it ; but have a great care you let not Freeman find it out.

Fid. I warrant you, sir, I am already all joy with the hopes of your commands ; and shall be all wings in the execution of 'em : speak quickly, sir.

Man. You said you'd beg for me.

Fid. I did, sir.

Man. Then you shall beg for me.

Fid. With all my heart, sir.

Man. Make suit for me.

Fid. How, sir?

Man. D'ye start! Thinkest thou, thou couldst do me any other service? Come, no dissembling honour: I know you can do it handsomely, thou wert made for't. You have lost your time with me at sea, you must recover it.

Fid. Do not, sir, beget yourself more reasons for your aversion to me, and make my obedience to you a fault; I am the unfittest in the world to do you such a service.

Man. Your cunning arguing against it shows but how fit you are for it. No more dissembling; here (I say) you must go use it for me to Olivia.

Fid. To her, sir?

Man. Go flatter, lie, kneel, promise, anything to get her for me: I cannot live unless I have her. Didst thou not say thou wouldst do anything to save my life? and she said you had a persuading face.

Fid. But did not you say, sir, your honour was dearer to you than your life? and would you have me contribute to the loss of that, and carry love from you to the most infamous, most false, and——

Man. And most beautiful!——

[*Sighs aside.*]

Fid. Most ungrateful woman that ever lived; for sure she must be so, that could desert you so soon, use you so basely, and so lately too: do not, do not forget it, sir, and think——

Man. No, I will not forget it, but think of revenge. Go, begone, and prevail for me, or never see me more.

Fid. You scorned her last night.

Man. I know not what I did last night; I dissembled last night.

Fid. Heavens!

Man. Begone, I say, and bring me love or compliance back, or hopes at least, or I'll never see thy face again, by——

Fid. O, do not swear, sir! first hear me.

Man. I'm impatient, away! you'll find me here till twelve.

[*Turns away.*]

Fid. Sir——

Man. Not one word, no insinuating argument more, or soothing persuasion; you'll have need of all your rhetoric with her: go strive to alter her, not me; begone.

[*Retires to the end of the stage, and exits.*]

Fid. Should I discover to him now my sex,
And lay before him his strange cruelty,
'Twould but incense it more.—No, 'tis not time.
For his love must I then betray my own?
Were ever love or chance till now severe?
Or shifting woman posed with such a task?
Forced to beg that which kills her, if obtain'd,
And give away her lover not to lose him!

[*Exit.*]

[Enter WIDOW BLACKACRE, in the middle of half-a-dozen LAWYERS, whispered to by a fellow in black, JERRY BLACKACRE following the crowd.]

Wid. Offer me a reference, you saucy companion you ! d'ye know who you speak to ? Art thou a solicitor in Chancery, and offer a reference ? A pretty fellow ! Mr. Serjeant Ploddon, 'here's a fellow has the impudence to offer me a reference !

Serj. Plod. Who's that has the impudence to offer a reference within these walls ?

Wid. Nay, for a splitter of causes to do't !

Serj. Plod. No, madam ; to a lady learned in the law, as you are, the offer of a reference were to impose upon you.

Wid. No, no, never fear me for a reference, Mr. Serjeant. But come, have you not forgot your brief ? Are you sure you shan't make the mistake of—hark you—[*Whispers.*—Go then, go to your court of Common Pleas, and say one thing over and over again : you do it so naturally, you'll never be suspected for protracting time.

Serj. Plod. Come, I know the course of the court, and your business. [*Exit.*]

Wid. Let's see, Jerry, where are my minutes ? Come, Mr. Quaint, pray go talk a great deal for me in Chancery ; let your words be easy, and your sense hard ; my cause requires it : branch it bravely, and deck my cause with flowers, that the snake may lie hidden. Go, go, and be sure you remember the decree of my Lord Chancellor, *Tricesimo quart* of the queen.

Quaint. I will, as I see cause, extenuate, or exemplify matter of fact ; baffle truth with impudence ; answer exceptions with questions, though never so impertinent ; for reasons give 'em words ; for law and equity, tropes and figures ; and so relax and enervate the sinews of their argument with the oil of my eloquence. But when my lungs can reason no longer, and not being able to say anything more for our cause, say everything of our adversary ; whose reputation, though never so clear and evident in the eye of the world, yet with sharp invectives—

Wid. Alias, Billingsgate.

Quaint. With poignant and sour invectives, I say, I will deface, wipe out, and obliterate his fair reputation, even as a record with the juice of lemons ; and tell such a story (for the truth on't is, all that we can do for our client in Chancery is telling a story) a fine story, a long story, such a story—

Wid. Go, save thy breath for the cause ; talk at the bar, Mr. Quaint : you are so copiously fluent, you can weary any one's ears sooner than your own tongue. Go, weary our adversaries' counsel, and the court ; go, thou art a fine-spoken person : adad, I shall make thy wife jealous of me, if you can but court the court into a decree for us. Go, get you gone, and remember—[*Whispers.*]

—[*Exit* QUAIN.]—Come, Mr. Blunder, pray bawl soundly for me, at the King's-bench, bluster, sputter, question, cavil ; but be sure your argument be intricate enough to confound the court ; and then you do my business. Talk what you will, but be sure your tongue never stand still ; for your own noise will secure your sense from censure : 'tis like coughing or hemming when one has got the belly-ache, which stifles the unmannerly noise. Go, dear rogue, and succeed ; and I'll invite thee, ere it be long, to more soused venison.

Blun. I'll warrant you, after your verdict, your judgment shall not be arrested upon if's and and's. [*Exit.*]

Wid. Come, Mr. Petulant, let me give you some new instructions for our cause in the Exchequer. Are the barons sate ?

Pet. Yes, no ; may be they are, may be they are not ; what know I ? what care I ?

Wid. Heyday ! I wish you would but snap up the counsel on t'other side anon at the bar as much ; and have a little more patience with me, that I might instruct you a little better.

Pet. You instruct me ! what is my brief for, mistress ?

Wid. Ay, but you seldom read your brief but at the bar, if you do it then.

Pet. Perhaps I do, perhaps I don't, and perhaps 'tis time enough ; pray hold yourself contented, mistress.

Wid. Nay, if you go there too, I will not be contented, sir ; though you, I see, will lose my cause for want of speaking, I wo' not : you shall hear me, and shall be instructed. Let's see your brief.

Pet. Send your solicitor to me. Instructed by a woman ! I'd have you to know, I do not wear a bar-gown—

Wid. By a woman ! and I'd have you to know, I am no common woman ; but a woman conversant in the laws of the land, as well as yourself, though I have no bar-gown.

Pet. Go to, go to, mistress, you are impertinent, and there's your brief for you : instruct me ! [*Flings her breviate at her.*]

Wid. Impertinent to me, you saucy Jack, you ! you return my breviate, but where's my fee ? you'll be sure to keep that, and scan that so well, that if there chance to be but a brass half-crown in't, one's sure to hear on't again : would you would but look on your breviate half so narrowly ! But pray give me my fee too, as well as my brief.

Pet. Mistress, that's without precedent. When did a counsel ever return his fee, pray ? and you are impertinent and ignorant to demand it.

Wid. Impertinent again, and ignorant, to me ! Gadsbodikins, you puny upstart in the law, to use me so ! you green-bag carrier, you murderer of unfortunate causes, the clerk's ink is scarce off of your fingers—you that newly come from lamp-blackening the judges' shoes, and are not fit to wipe mine : you call me impertinent and ignorant ! I would give thee a cuff on the ear, sitting the courts, if I were ignorant. Marry-gep, if it had not been for me, thou hadst been yet but a hearing counsel at the bar. [*Exit* PETULANT.]

Enter MR. BUTTONGOWN, crossing the stage in haste.

Mr. Buttongown, Mr. Buttongown, whither so fast? what, won't you stay till we are heard?

But. I cannot, Mrs. Blackacre, I must be at the council, my lord's cause stays there for me.

Wid. And mine suffers here.

But. I cannot help it.

Wid. I'm undone.

But. What's that to me?

Wid. Consider the five-pound fee, if not my cause: that was something to you.

But. Away, away! pray be not so troublesome, mistress: I must be gone.

Wid. Nay, but consider a little: I am your old client, my lord but a new one; or let him be what he will, he will hardly be a better client to you than myself: I hope you believe I shall be in law as long as I live; therefore am no despicable client. Well, but go to your lord; I know you expect he should make you a judge one day; but I hope his promise to you will prove a true lord's promise. But that he might be sure to fail you, I wish you had his bond for't.

But. But what, will you yet be thus impertinent, mistress?

Wid. Nay, I beseech you, sir, stay; if it be but to tell me my lord's case: come, in short——

But. Nay, then——

[Exit.]

Wid. Well, Jerry, observe child, and lay it up for hereafter. These are those lawyers who, by being in all causes, are in none: therefore if you would have 'em for you, let your adversary fee 'em; for he may chance to depend upon them; and so, in being against thee, they'll be for thee.

Fer. Ay, mother; they put me in mind of the unconscionable wooers of widows, who undertake briskly their matrimonial business for their money; but when they have got it once, let who's will look to them. Therefore have a care of 'em, forsooth. There's advice for your advice.

Wid. Well said, boy.—Come, Mr. Splitcause, pray go see when my cause in Chancery comes on; and go speak with Mr. Quillit in the King's Bench, and Mr. Quirk in the Common Pleas, and see how our matters go there.

Enter MAJOR OLDFOX.

Old. Lady, a good and propitious morning to you; and may all your causes go as well as if I myself were judge of 'em!

Wid. Sir, excuse me; I am busy, and cannot answer compliments in Westminster Hall. Go, Mr. Splitcause, and come to me again to that bookseller's; there I'll stay for you, that you may be sure to find me.

Old. No, sir, come to the other bookseller's. I'll attend your ladyship thither. [Exit SPLITCAUSE.]

Wid. Why to the other?

Old. Because he's my bookseller, lady.

Wid. What, to sell you lozenges for your catarrh? or medicines for your corns? What else can a major deal with a bookseller for?

Old. Lady, he prints for me.

Wid. Why, are you an author?

Old. Of some few essays; deign you, lady, to peruse 'em.—
[*Aside.*] She is a woman of parts; and I must win her by showing mine.

Bookseller's Boy. Will you see Culpepper, mistress? Aristotle's Problems?

Wid. No; let's see Dalton, Hughs, Shepherd, Wingate.

B. Boy. We have no law books.

Wid. No! you are a pretty bookseller then.

Old. Come, have you e'er a one of my essays left?

B. Boy. Yes, sir, we have enough, and shall always have 'em.

Old. How so?

B. Boy. Why, they are good, steady, lasting ware.

Old. Nay, I hope they will live; let's see. Be pleased, madam, to peruse the poor endeavours of my pen; for I have a pen, though I say it, that—
[Gives her a book.]

Fer. Pray let me see St. George for Christendom, or, The Seven Champions of England.

Wid. No, no; give him the Young Clerk's Guide.—What, we shall have you read yourself into a humour of rambling and fighting, and studying military discipline, and wearing red breeches.

Old. Nay, if you talk of military discipline, show him my Treatise of the Art Military.

Wid. Hold. I would as willingly he should read a play.

Fer. O, pray forsooth, mother, let me have a play.

Wid. No, sirrah; there are young students of the law enough spoiled already by plays. They would make you in love with your laundress, or, what's worse, some queen of the stage that was a laundress.—[*Several crossing the stage.*] But stay, Jerry, is not that Mr. What-d'ye-call-him, that goes there, he that offered to sell me a suit in Chancery for five hundred pounds, for a hundred down, and only paying the clerk's fees?

Fer. Ay, forsooth, 'tis he.

Wid. Then stay here, and have a care of the bags, whilst I follow him. Have a care of the bags, I say.

Fer. And do you have a care, forsooth, of the statute against champarty, I say. [Exit WIDOW.]

Re-enter FREEMAN.

Free. [*aside.*] So, there's a limb of my widow, which was wont to be inseparable from her; she can't be far.—[*Aloud.*] How now, my pretty son-in-law that shall be, where's my widow?

Fer. My mother, but not your widow, will be forthcoming presently.

Free. Your servant, major. What, are you buying furniture for a little sleeping closet, which you miscall a study? For you only bind your books up neatly and make 'em fine, for other people to use 'em. And your bookseller is properly your upholsterer, for he furnishes your room, rather than your head.

Old. Well, well, good sea-lieutenant, study you your compass; that's more than your head can deal with.—[*Aside.*] I will go find out the widow, to keep her out of his sight, or he'll board her whilst I am treating a peace. [Exit.]

Fer. Nay, prithee, friend, now let me have but the Seven Champions. You shall trust me no longer than till my mother's Mr. Splitcause comes; for I hope he'll lend me wherewithal to pay for't.

Free. Lend thee! here, I'll pay him. Do you want money, squire? I'm sorry a man of your estate should want money.

Fer. Nay, my mother will ne'er let me be at age; and till then, she says—

Free. At age! why, you are at age already to have spent an estate, man. There are younger than you have lost many thousand pounds at play.

Fer. Ay, they are happy sparks! Nay, I know some of my schoolfellows, who, when we were at school, were two years younger than me; but now, I know not how, are grown men before me, and go where they will, and look to themselves. But my curmudgeonly mother won't allow me wherewithal to be a man of myself with.

Free. Why, there 'tis; I knew your mother was in fault. Ask but your schoolfellows what they did to be men of themselves.

Fer. Why, I know they went to law with their mothers; for they say, there's no good to be done upon a widow mother till one goes to law with her; but mine is as plaguy a lawyer as any's of our inn. Then would she marry too, and cut down my trees. Now, I should hate, man, to have my father's wife kissed by another man; and our trees are the purest, tall, even, shady twigs, by my fa—

Free. Come, squire, let your mother and your trees fall as she pleases, rather than wear this gown and carry green bags all thy life, and be pointed at for a Tony. But you shall be able to deal with her yet the common way. Thou shalt make false love to some lawyer's daughter, whose father, upon the hopes of thy marrying her, shall lend thee money and law to preserve thy estate and trees; and thy mother is so ugly nobody will have her, if she cannot cut down thy trees.

Fer. Nay, if I had but anybody to stand by me, I am as stomachful as another.

Free. That will I; I'll not see any hopeful young gentleman abused.

B. Boy. By any but yourself.

[*Aside.*]

Fer. The truth on't is, mine's as arrant a widow-mother to her

poor child as any's in England. She won't so much as let one have sixpence in one's pocket to see a motion, or the dancing of the ropes, or——

Free. Come, you shan't want money ; there's gold for you.

Fer. O lord, sir, two guineas ! D'ye lend me this ? Is there no trick in't ? Well, sir, I'll give you my bond for security.

Free. No, no ; thou hast given me thy face for security : anybody would swear thou dost not look like a cheat. You shall have what you will of me ; and if your mother will not be kinder to you, come to me, who will.

Fer. [*aside.*] By my fa— he's a curious fine gentleman !—[*Aloud.*] But will you stand by one ?

Free. If you can be resolute.

Fer. Can be resolved ! Gad, if she gives me but a cross word, I'll leave her to-night, and come to you. But now I have got money, I'll go to Jack-of-all-Trades, at t'other end of the Hall, and buy the neatest purest things——

Free. [*aside.*] And I'll follow the great boy, and my blow at his mother. Steal away the calf, and the cow will follow you.

[*Exit JERRY, followed by FREEMAN.*]

*Re-enter, on the other side, MANLY, WIDOW BLACKACRE and
OLDFOX.*

Man. Plague on your cause, can't you lose it without me ? which you are like enough to do, if it be, as you say, an honest one : I will suffer no longer for't.

Wid. Nay, captain, I tell you, you are my prime witness ; and the cause is just now coming on, Mr. Splitcause tells me. Lord, methinks you should take a pleasure in walking here, as half you see now do ; for they have no business here, I assure you.

Man. Yes ; but I'll assure you then, their business is to persecute me. But d'ye think I'll stay any longer, to have a rogue, because he knows my name, pluck me aside and whisper a news-book secret to me with a stinking breath ? a second come piping angry from the court, and sputter in my face his tedious complaints against it ? a third law-coxcomb, because he saw me once at a reader's dinner, come and put me a long law case, to make a discovery of his indefatigable dulness and my wearied patience ? a fourth, a most barbarous civil rogue, who will keep a man half an hour in the crowd with a bowed body, and a hat off, acting the reformed sign of the Salutation tavern, to hear his bountiful professions of service and friendship, whilst he cares not if I were dead, and I am wishing him hanged out of my way ?—I'd as soon run the gauntlet, as walk t'other turn.

Re-enter JERRY BLACKACRE, without his bags, but laden with trinkets, which he endeavours to hide from his Mother, and followed at a distance by FREEMAN.

Wid. O, are you come, sir? but where have you been, you ass? and how came you thus laden?

Fer. Look here, forsooth, mother; now here's a duck, here's a boar-cat, and here's an owl.

[Making a noise with catcalls and other such like instruments.]

Wid. Yes, there is an owl, sir.

Old. He's an ungracious bird indeed.

Wid. But go, thou trangame, and carry back those trangames, which thou hast stolen or purloined; for nobody would trust a minor in Westminster Hall, sure.

Fer. Hold yourself contented, forsooth: I have these commodities by a fair bargain and sale; and there stands my witness and creditor.

Wid. How's that? What, sir, d'ye think to get the mother by giving the child a rattle?—But where are my bags, my writings, you rascal?

Fer. O la! where are they indeed?

[Aside.]

Wid. How, sirrah? speak, come—

Man. You can tell her, Freeman, I suppose.

[Apart to him.]

Free. 'Tis true I made one of your salt-water sharks steal 'em whilst he was eagerly choosing his commodities, as he calls 'em, in order to my design upon his mother.

[Apart to him.]

Wid. Won't you speak? Where were you, I say, you son of a — an unfortunate woman?—O, major, I'm undone! They are all that concern my estate, my jointure, my husband's deed of gift, my evidences for all my suits now depending! What will become of them?

Free. *[aside.]* I'm glad to hear this.—*[Aloud.]* They'll be all safe, I warrant you, madam.

Wid. O where? where? Come, you villain, along with me, and show me where.

[Exeunt WIDOW, JERRY, and OLDFOX.]

Man. Thou hast taken the right way to get a widow, by making her great boy rebel; for when nothing will make a widow marry, she'll do it to cross her children. But canst thou in earnest marry this harpy, this volume of shrivelled blurred parchments and law, this attorney's desk?

Free. Ay, ay; I'll marry and live honestly, that is, give my creditors, not her, due benevolence—pay my debts.

Man. Thy creditors, you see, are not so barbarous as to put thee in prison; and wilt thou commit thyself to a noisome dungeon for thy life? which is the only satisfaction thou canst give thy creditors by this match.

Free. Why, is not she rich?

Man. Ay; but he that marries a widow for her money, will find

himself as much mistaken as the widow that marries a young fellow for due benevolence, as you call it.

Free. Why, d'ye think I shan't deserve wages?

Man. I tell thee again, he that is the slave in the mine has the least proprietary in the ore. If thou wouldst have her money, rather get to be her trustee than her husband; for a true widow will make over her estate to anybody, and cheat herself rather than be cheated by her children or a second husband.

Re-enter JERRY, running in a fright.

Jer. O la, I'm undone! I'm undone! my mother will kill me;—you said you'd stand by one.

Free. So I will, my brave squire, I warrant thee.

Jer. Ay, but I dare not stay till she comes; for she's as furious, now she has lost her writings, as a bitch when she has lost her puppies.

Man. The comparison's handsome.

Jer. O, she's here!

Free. [*to the SAILOR.*] Take him, Jack, and make haste with him to your master's lodging; and be sure you keep him up till I come.

[*Exeunt JERRY and SAILOR.*]

Re-enter WIDOW BLACKACRE and OLDFOX.

Wid. O my dear writings! Where's this heathen rogue, my minor?

Free. Gone to drown or hang himself.

Wid. No, I know him too well; he'll ne'er be *felo de se* that way; but he may go and choose a guardian of his own head, and so be *felo de ses biens*; for he has not yet chosen one.

Free. Say you so? And he shan't want one.

[*Aside.*]

Wid. But, now I think on't, 'tis you, sir, have put this cheat upon me. But I'll play fast and loose with you yet, if there be law, and my minor and writings are not forthcoming; I'll bring my action of detinue or trover. But first, I'll try to find out this guardianless, graceless villain.—Will you jog, major?

Man. If you have lost your evidence, I hope your causes cannot go on, and I may be gone?

Wid. O no; stay but a coughing while (as one may say) and I'll be with you again.

[*Exeunt WIDOW and OLDFOX.*]

Free. Well; sure I am the first man that ever began a love intrigue in Westminster Hall.

Man. No, sure; for the love to a widow generally begins here; and as the widow's cause goes against the heir or executors, the jointure-rivals commence their suit to the widow.

Free. Well; but how, pray, have you passed your time here, since I was forced to leave you alone? You have had a great deal of patience.

Man. Is this a place to be alone, or have patience in? But I have had patience, indeed; for I have drawn upon me, since I came, but three quarrels and two lawsuits.

Free. Nay, faith, you are too curst to be let loose in the world : you should be tied up again in your sea-kennel, called a ship. But how could you quarrel here ?

Man. How could I refrain ? A lawyer talked peremptorily and saucily to me, and as good as gave me the lie.

Free. They do it so often to one another at the bar, that they make no bones on't elsewhere.

Man. However, I gave him a cuff on the ear ; whereupon he jogs two men, whose backs were turned to us (for they were reading at a bookseller's,) to witness I struck him, sitting the courts ; which office they so readily promised, that I called 'em rascals and knights of the post. One of 'em presently calls two other absent witnesses, who were coming towards us at a distance ; whilst the other, with a whisper, desires to know my name, that he might have satisfaction by way of challenge, as t'other by way of writ ; but if it were not rather to direct his brother's writ, than his own challenge.—There, you see, is one of my quarrels, and two of my lawsuits.

Free. So !—and the other two ?

Man. For advising a poet to leave off writing, and turn lawyer, because he is dull and impudent, and says or writes nothing now but by precedent.

Free. And the third quarrel ?

Man. For giving more sincere advice to a handsome, well-dressed young fellow, who asked it too.

Free. Nay, if you will be giving your sincere advice to lovers and poets, you will not fail of quarrels.

Man. Or if I stay in this place ; for I see more quarrels crowding upon me. Let's be gone, and avoid 'em.

Enter NOVEL at a distance, coming towards them.

A plague on him, that sneer is ominous to us ; he is coming upon us, and we shall not be rid of him.

Nov. Dear bully, don't look so grum upon me ; you told me just now, you had forgiven me a little harmless raillery upon wooden legs last night.

Man. Yes, yes, pray begone, I am talking of business.

Nov. Can't I hear it ? I love thee, and will be faithful, and always—

Man. Impertinent. 'Tis business that concerns Freeman only.

Nov. Well, I love Freeman too, and would not divulge his secret.—Prithee speak, prithee, I must—

Man. Prithee let me be rid of thee, I must be rid of thee.

Nov. Faith, thou canst hardly, I love thee so. Come, I must know the business.

Man. [*aside.*] So, I have it now.—[*Aloud.*] Why, if you needs will know it, he has a quarrel, and his adversary bids him bring two friends with him : now, I am one, and we are thinking who we shall have for a third.

[*Several crossing the stage.*]

Nov. A plague, there goes a fellow owes me a hundred pounds, and goes out of town to-morrow : I'll speak with him, and come to you presently. [Exit.

Man. No, but you won't.

Free. You are dexterously rid of him.

Re-enter OLDFOX.

Man. To what purpose, since here comes another as impertinent ? I know by his grin he is bound hither.

Old. Your servant, worthy, noble captain. Well, I have left the widow, because she carried me from your company : for, faith, captain, I must needs tell thee thou art the only officer in England, who was not an Edgehill officer, that I care for.

Man. I'm sorry for't.

Old. Why, wouldst thou have me love them ?

Man. Anybody rather than me.

Old. What ! you are modest, I see ; therefore, too, I love thee.

Man. No, I am not modest ; but love to brag myself, and can't patiently hear you fight over the last civil war. Therefore, go look out the fellow I saw just now here, that walks with his sword and stockings out at heels, and let him tell you the history of that scar on his cheek, to give you occasion to show yours got in the field at Bloomsbury, not that of Edgehill. Go to him, poor fellow ; he is fasting, and has not yet the happiness this morning to stink of brandy and tobacco : go, give him some to hear you ; I am busy.

Old. Well, egad, I love thee now, boy, for thy surliness. Thou art no tame captain, I see, that will suffer——

Man. An old fox.

Old. All that shan't make me angry. I consider that thou art peevish, and fretting at some ill-success at law. Prithee, tell me what ill luck you have met with here.

Man. You.

Old. Do I look like the picture of ill-luck ? Nouns, I love thee more and more. And shall I tell thee what made me love thee first ?

Man. Do ; that I may be rid of that quality and thee.

Old. 'Twas thy wearing that broad sword there.

Man. Here, Freeman, let's change : I'll never wear it more.

Old. How ! you won't, sure. Prithee, don't look like one of our holiday captains now-a-days, with a bodkin by your side, you martinet rogue.

Man. [*aside.*] O, then, there's hopes.—[*Aloud.*] What, d'ye find fault with martinet ? Let me tell you, sir, 'tis the best exercise in the world ; the most ready, most easy, most graceful exercise that ever was used, and the most——

Old. Nay, nay, sir, no more : sir, your servant : if you praise martinet once, I have done with you, sir. Martinet ! martinet !

[Exit.

Free. Nay, you have made him leave you as willingly as ever he did an enemy ; for he was truly for the king and parliament : for the parliament in their list ; and for the king in cheating 'em of their pay, and never hurting the king's party in the field.

Enter a LAWYER towards them.

Man. A plague ! this way : here's a lawyer I know threatening us with another greeting.

Law. Sir, sir, your very servant ; I was afraid you had forgotten me.

Man. I was not afraid you had forgotten me.

Law. No, sir ; we lawyers have pretty good memories.

Man. You ought to have by your wits.

Law. O, you are a merry gentleman, sir ; I remember you were merry when I was last in your company.

Man. I was never merry in thy company, Mr. Lawyer, sure.

Law. Why, I'm sure you joked upon me, and shammed me all night long.

Man. Shammed ! prithee what barbarous law-term is that.

Law. Shamming ! why, don't you know that ? 'tis all our way of wit, sir.

Man. I am glad I do not know it then. Shamming ! what does he mean by't, Freeman ?

Free. Shamming is telling you an insipid dull lie with a dull face, which the sly wag the author only laughs at himself ; and making himself believe 'tis a good jest, puts the sham only upon himself.

Man. So, your lawyer's jest, I find, like his practice, has more knavery than wit in't. I should make the worst shammer in England : I must always deal ingenuously, as I will with you, Mr. Lawyer, and advise you to be seen rather with attorneys and solicitors than such fellows as I am : they will credit your practice more.

Law. No, sir, your company's an honour to me.

Man. No, faith ; go this way, there goes an attorney ; leave me for him ; let it never be said a lawyer's civility did him hurt.

Law. No, worthy, honoured sir ; I'll not leave you for any attorney, sure.

Man. Unless he had a fee in his hand.

Law. Have you any business here, sir ? Try me : I'd serve you sooner than any attorney breathing.

Man. Business—[*aside*]. So, I have thought of a sure way.—[*Aloud*.] Yes, faith, I have a little business.

Law. Have you so, sir ? In what court, sir ? what is't, sir ? Tell me but how I may serve you, and I'll do't, sir, and take it for as great an honour—

Man. Faith, 'tis for a poor orphan of a sea-officer of mine, that has no money. But if it could be followed in *formâ pauperis*, and when the legacy's recovered—

Law. *Formâ pauperis*, sir?

Man. Ay, sir.

[*Several crossing the stage.*]

Law. Mr. Bumblecase, Mr. Bumblecase! a word with you.—Sir, I beg your pardon at present; I have a little business——

Man. Which is not in *formâ pauperis*. [Exit LAWYER.]

Free. So, you have now found a way to be rid of people without quarrelling?

Enter ALDERMAN.

Man. But here's a city rogue will stick as hard upon us, as if I owed him money.

Ald. Captain, noble sir, I am yours heartily, d'ye see; why should you avoid your old friends?

Man. And why should you follow me? I owe you nothing.

Ald. Out of my hearty respects to you: for there is not a man in England——

Man. Thou wouldst save from hanging with the expense of a shilling only.

Ald. Nay, nay, but, captain, you are like enough to tell me——

Man. Truth, which you won't care to hear; therefore you had better go talk with somebody else.

Ald. No, I know nobody can inform me better of some young wit, or spendthrift, that has a good dipped seat and estate in Middlesex, Hertfordshire, Essex, or Kent; any of these would serve my turn: now, if you knew of such a one, and would but help——

Man. You to finish his ruin.

Ala. I'faith, you should have a snip——

Man. Of your nose, you thirty-in-the-hundred rascal; would you make me your squire setter? [Takes him by the nose.]

Ald. Oh!

Free. Hold, or here will be your third law-suit.

Ald. Gads-precious, you hectoring person you, are you wild? I meant you no hurt, sir: I begin to think, as things go, land-security best, and have for a convenient mortgage, some ten, fifteen or twenty thousand pounds by me.

Man. Then go lay it out upon an hospital, and take a mortgage of Heaven, according to your city custom; for you think by laying out a little money to hook in that too hereafter. Do, I say, and keep the poor you've made by taking forfeitures, that Heaven may not take yours.

Ald. No, to keep the cripples you make this war. This war spoils our trade.

Man. Plague on your trade! 'tis the better for't.

Ald. What, will you speak against our trade?

Man. And dare you speak against the war, our trade?

Ald. [*aside.*] Well, he may be a convoy of ships I am concerned in.—[*Aloud.*] Come, captain, I will have a fair correspondence with you, say what you will.

Man. Then prithee be gone.

Ald. No, faith ; prithee, captain, let's go drink a dish of laced coffee, and talk of the times. Come, I'll treat you : nay, you shall go, for I have no business here.

Man. But I have.

Ald. To pick up a man to give thee a dinner. Come, I'll do thy business for thee.

Man. Faith, now I think on't, so you may, as well as any man ; for 'tis to pick up a man to be bound with me, to one who expects city security for——

Ald. Nay, then your servant, captain ; business must be done——

Man. Ay, if it can. But, hark you, alderman ; without you——

Ald. Business, sir, I say, must be done ; and there's an officer of the treasury [*several crossing the stage*] I have an affair with—— [*Exit.*

Man. You see now what the mighty friendship of the world is ; what all ceremony, embraces, and plentiful professions come to ! You are no more to believe a professing friend than a threatening enemy ; and as no man hurts you, that tells you he'll do you a mischief, no man, you see, is your servant who says he is so. Why, then, should a man be troubled with the flattery of knaves if he be not a fool ; or with the fondness of fools, if he be not a knave.

Free. Only for his pleasure ; for there is some in laughing at fools, and disappointing knaves.

Man. That's a pleasure, I think, would cost you too dear, as well as marrying your widow to disappoint her. But, for my part, I have no pleasure by 'em but in despising 'em, wheresoe'er I meet 'em ; and then the pleasure of hoping so to be rid of 'em. But now my comfort is, I am not worth a shilling in the world, which all the world shall know ; and then I'm sure I shall have none of 'em come near me.

Free. A very pretty comfort, which I think you pay too dear for. —But is the twenty pound gone since the morning ?

Man. To my boat's crew.—Would you have the poor, honest, brave fellows want ?

Free. Rather than you or I.

Man. Why, art thou without money ? thou who art a friend to everybody ?

Free. I ventured my last stake upon the squire to nick him of his mother ; and cannot help you to a dinner, unless you will go dine with my lord——

Man. No, no ; the ordinary is too dear for me, where flattery must pay for my dinner : I am no herald or poet.

Free. We'll go then to the bishop's——

Man. There you must flatter the old philosophy : I cannot renounce my reason for a dinner.

Free. Why, then, let's go to your alderman's.

Man. Hang him, rogue ! that were not to dine, for he makes you drunk with lees of sack before dinner, to take away your stomach ; and there you must call usury and extortion God's blessing, or the honest turning of the penny ; hear him brag of the leather breeches

in which he trotted first to town, and make a greater noise with his money in his parlour, than his cashiers do in his counting-house, without hopes of borrowing a shilling.

Free. Ay ! 'tis like dining with the great gamesters ; and when they fall to their common dessert, to see the heaps of gold drawn on all hands, without going to twelve. Let us go to my Lady Goodly's.

Man. There to flatter her looks. You must mistake her grandchildren for her own ; praise her cook, that she may rail at him ; and feed her dogs, not yourself.

Free. What d'ye think of eating with your lawyer then ?

Man. Eat with him ! hang him ! To hear him employ his barbarous eloquence in a reading upon the two-and-thirty good bits in a shoulder of veal, and be forced yourself to praise the cold bribe-pie that stinks, and drink law-French wine as rough and harsh as his law-French. I'd rather dine in the Temple-rounds or walks, with the knights without noses, or the knights of the post, who are honest fellows and better company. But let us home and try our fortune ; for I'll stay no longer here for your widow.

Free. Well, let us go home then ; for I must go for my widow, and look after my new charge. Three or four hundred years ago a man might have dined in this hall.

Man. But now the lawyer only here is fed ;
And, bully-like, by quarrels gets his bread.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—MANLY'S Lodging.

Enter MANLY and FIDELIA.

Man. Well, there's success in thy face. Hast thou prevailed ?
say.

Fid. As I could wish, sir.

Man. So ; I told thee what thou wert fit for, and thou wouldst not believe me. Come, thank me for bringing thee acquainted with thy genius. Well, thou hast mollified her heart for me ?

Fid. No, sir, not so ; but what's better.

Man. How, what's better ?

Fid. I shall harden your heart against her.

Man. Have a care, sir ; my heart is too much in earnest to be fooled with, and my desire at height, and needs no delays to incite it. What, you know how to endear pleasure by withholding it ? But leave off your tricks, sir, and tell me, will she be kind ?

Fid. Kinder than you could wish, sir.

Man. So, then : well, prithee, what said she ?

Fid. She said—

Man. What ? thou'rt so tedious : speak comfort to me ; what ?

Fid. That of all things you are her aversion.

Man. How !

Fid. That she would sooner take a bedfellow out of an hospital, and diseases into her arms, than you.

Man. What ?

Fid. That she would rather trust her honour with a dissolute hector, nay worse, with a finical baffled coward, all over loathsome with affectation of the fine gentleman.

Man. What's all this you say ?

Fid. Nay, that my offers of your love to her were more offensive, than when parents woo their daughters to the enjoyment of riches only ; and that you were in all circumstances as nauseous to her as a husband on compulsion.

Man. Hold ! I understand you not.

Fid. So, 'twill work, I see.

[*Aside.*

Man. Did you not tell me —

Fid. She called you ten thousand ruffians.

Man. Hold, I say.

Fid. Brutes —

Man. Hold.

Fid. Sea-monsters —

Man. Out on your intelligence ! Hear me a little now.

Fid. Nay, surly coward she called you too.

Man. Won't you hold yet ? Hold, or —

Fid. Nay, sir, pardon me ; I could not but tell you she had the baseness, the injustice, to call you coward, sir ; coward, coward, sir.

Man. Not yet —

Fid. I've done ; — coward, sir.

Man. Did not you say, she was kinder than I could wish her ?

Fid. Yes, sir.

Man. How then ? — O — I understand you now. At first she appeared in rage and disdain ; the truest sign of a coming woman ; but at last you prevailed, it seems ; did you not ?

Fid. Yes, sir.

Man. So then ; let's know that only : come, prithee, without delays. I'll kiss thee for that news beforehand.

Fid. So ; the kiss I'm sure is welcome to me, whatsoe'er the news will be to you.

[*Aside,*

Man. Come, speak, my dear volunteer.

Fid. How welcome were that kind word too, if it were not for another woman's sake !

[*Aside.*

Man. What, won't you speak ? You prevailed for me at last, you say ?

Fid. No, sir.

Man. No more of your fooling, sir ; it will not agree with my impatience or temper.

Fid. Then not to fool you, sir, I spoke to her for you, but prevailed for myself ; she would not hear me when I spoke in your

behalf, but bid me say what I would in my own, though she gave me no occasion, she was so coming, and so was kinder, sir, than you could wish ; which I was only afraid to let you know, without some warning.

Man. How's this? Young man, you are of a lying age ; but I must hear you out, and if——

Fid. I would not abuse you, and cannot wrong her by any report of her, she is so wicked.

Man. How, wicked ! had she the impudence, at the second sight of you only——

Fid. Impudence, sir ! oh, she has impudence enough to put a Court out of countenance.

Man. Why, what said she ?

Fid. Her tongue, I confess, was silent ; but her speaking eyes——

Man. I know there are those whose eyes reflect obscenity ; but there are others, too, who use a little art with their looks, to make 'em seem more beautiful, not more loving ; which vain young fellows like you are apt to interpret in their own favour, and to the lady's wrong.

Fid. Seldom, sir. Pray, have you a care of gloating eyes ; for he that loves to gaze upon 'em will find at last a thousand fools in 'em instead of Cupids.

Man. Very well, sir.—But what, you had only eye-kindness from Olivia ?

Fid. I tell you again, sir, no woman sticks there ; eye-promises of love they only keep ; nay, they are contracts which make you sure of 'em. In short, sir, she seeing me, with shame and amazement dumb, inactive, and resistless, threw her twisting arms about my neck, and smothered me with a thousand tasteless kisses. Believe me, sir, they were so to me.

Man. Why did you not avoid 'em then ?

Fid. I fenced with her eager arms, as you did with the grapples of the enemy's fireship ; and nothing but cutting 'em off could have freed me.

Man. Lost, lost woman, that could be so false and infamous ! and lost, lost heart of mine that cannot yet be false, though so infamous ! What easy, tame, suffering, trampled things does that little god of talking cowards make of us ! but——

Fid. So ; it works, I find, as I expected.

[*Aside.*

Man. But she was false to me before, she told me so herself, and yet I could not quite believe it ; but she was, so that her second falseness is a favour to me, not an injury, in revenging me upon the man that wronged me first of her love. Her love !—a witch's love ! —But what, did she not kiss well, sir ? I'm sure I thought her lips—but I must not think of 'em more—but yet they are such I could still kiss—grow to—and then tear off with my teeth, grind 'em into mammocks, and spit 'em into her false face.

Fid. Poor man, how uneasy he is ! I have hardly the heart to

give so much pain, though withal I give him a cure, and to myself new life.

[*Aside.*]

Man. But what, her kisses sure could not but warm you into a compliance with hers at least?

Fid. Nay, more, I confess——

Man. What more? speak.

Fid. All you could fear had passed between us, if I could have been made to wrong you, sir, in that nature.

Man. Could have been made! you lie, you did.

Fid. Indeed, sir, 'twas impossible for me; besides, we were interrupted by a visit; but I confess, she would not let me stir till I promised to return to her again within this hour, as soon as it should be dark; by which time she would dispose of her visit, and her servants and herself, for my reception; which I was fain to promise, to get from her.

Man. Ha!

Fid. But if ever I go near her again, may you, sir, think me as false to you as she is; hate and renounce me, as you ought to do her, and, I hope, will do now.

Man. Well, but now I think on't, you shall keep your word with your lady. What, a young fellow, and fail the first, nay, so tempting an assignation!

Fid. How, sir?

Man. I say, you shall go to her when 'tis dark, and shall not disappoint her.

Fid. I, sir! I should disappoint her more by going, for——

Man. How so?

Fid. Her impudence and injustice to you will make me disappoint her love, loathe her.

Man. Come, you have my leave; and if you disgust her, I'll go with you, and act love, whilst you shall talk it only.

Fid. You, sir! nay, then I'll never go near her. You act love, sir! You must but act it indeed, after all I have said to you. Think of your honour, sir: love——

Man. Well, call it revenge, and that is honourable: I'll be revenged on her; and thou shalt be my second.

Fid. Not in a base action, sir, when you are your own enemy. O go not near her, sir; for Heaven's sake, for your own, think not of it!

Man. How concerned you are! I thought I should catch you. What, you are my rival at last, and are in love with her yourself; and have spoken ill of her out of your love to her, not me; and therefore would not have me go to her!

Fid. Heaven witness for me, 'tis because I love you only, I would not have you go to her.

Man. Come, come, the more I think on't, the more I'm satisfied you do love her. Those kisses, young man, I knew were irresistible; 'tis certain.

Fid. There is nothing certain in the world, sir, but my truth and your courage.

Man. Your servant, sir. Besides, false and ungrateful as she has been to me, and though I may believe her hatred to me great as you report it, yet I cannot think you are so soon and at that rate beloved by her, though you may endeavour it.

Fid. Nay, if that be all, and you doubt it still, sir, I will conduct you to her; and, unseen, your ears shall judge of her falseness, and my truth to you, if that will satisfy you.

Man. Yes, there is some satisfaction in being quite out of doubt; because 'tis that alone withholds us from the pleasure of revenge.

Fid. Revenge! What revenge can you have, sir? Disdain is best revenged by scorn; and faithless love, by loving another, and making her happy with the other's losings. Which, if I might advise——

Enter FREEMAN.

Man. Not a word more.

Free. What, are you talking of love yet, captain? I thought you had done with't.

Man. Why, what did you hear me say?

Free. Something imperfectly of love, I think.

Man. I was only wondering why fools, rascals, and desertless wretches, should still have the better of men of merit with all women, as much as with their own common mistress, Fortune.

Free. Because most women, like Fortune, are blind, seem to do all things in jest, and take pleasure in extravagant actions. Their love deserves neither thanks, or blame, for they cannot help it; 'tis all sympathy; therefore, the noisy, the finical, the talkative, the cowardly, and effeminate, have the better of the brave, the reasonable, and man of honour; for they have no more reason in their love or kindness, than Fortune herself.

Man. Yes, they have their reason. First, honour in a man they fear too much to love; and sense in a lover upbraids their want of it; and they hate anything that disturbs their admiration of themselves; but they are of that vain number, who had rather show their false generosity, in giving away profusely to worthless flatterers, than in paying just debts. And, in short, all women, like fortune (as you say) and rewards, are lost by too much meriting.

Fid. All women, sir! sure there are some who have no other quarrel to a lover's merit, but that it begets their despair of him.

Man. Thou art young enough to be credulous; but we——

Enter SAILOR.

Sail. Here are now below, the scolding, daggled gentlewoman, and that Major Old—Old—Fop, I think you call him.

Free. Oldfox?—prithee bid 'em come up, with your leave, captain, for now I can talk with her upon the square, if I shall not disturb you.

[*Exit SAILOR.*

Man. No; for I'll begone. Come, volunteer.

Free. Nay, pray stay; the scene between us will not be so tedious to you as you think. Besides, you shall see how I rigged my 'squire out, with the remains of my shipwrecked wardrobe; he is under your sea valet-de-chambre's hands, and by this time dressed, and will be worth your seeing. Stay, and I'll fetch my fool.

Man. No; you know I cannot easily laugh; besides, my volunteer and I have business abroad.

[*Exeunt* MANLY and FIDELIA *on one side*; FREEMAN *on the other*.]

Enter MAJOR OLDFOX and WIDOW BLACKACRE.

Wid. What, nobody here! did not the fellow say he was within?

Old. Yes, lady; and he may be perhaps a little busy at present; but if you think the time long till he comes [*unfolding papers*] I'll read you here some of the fruits of my leisure, the overflowings of my fancy and pen. [*Aside.*—To value me right, she must know my parts. [*Aloud.*—Come—

Wid. No, no; I have reading work enough of my own in my bag, I thank you.

Old. Ay, law, madam; but here's a poem, in blank verse, which I think a handsome declaration, of one's passion.

Wid. O, if you talk of declarations, I'll show you one of the prettiest penned things, which I mended too myself, you must know.

Old. Nay, lady, if you have used yourself so much to the reading harsh law, that you hate smooth poetry, here is a character for you, of—

Wid. A character! nay, then, I'll show you my bill in Chancery here, that gives you such a character of my adversary, makes him as black—

Old. Pshaw! away, away, lady! But if you think the character too long, here is an epigram, not above twenty lines, upon a cruel lady, who decreed her servant should hang him:elf, to demonstrate his passion.

Wid. Decreed! if you talk of decreeing, I have such a decree here, drawn by the finest clerk—

Old. O lady, lady, all interruption and no sense between us, as if we were lawyers at the bar! but I had forgot, Apollo and Littleton never lodge in a head together. If you hate verses, I'll give you a cast of my politics in prose. 'Tis a letter to a friend in the country, which is now the way of all such sober solid persons as myself, when they have a mind to publish their disgust to the times; though perhaps, between you and I, they have no friend in the country. And sure a politic, serious person, may as well have a feigned friend in the country to write to, as an idle poet a feigned mistress to write to. And so here's my letter to a friend, or no friend, in the country, concerning the late conjuncture of affairs, in relation to coffee-houses; or, "The Coffee-man's Case."

Wid. Nay, if your letter have a case in't, 'tis something ; but first I'll read you a letter of mine to a friend in the country, called a letter of attorney.

Re-enter FREEMAN, with JERRY BLACKACRE in an old gaudy suit and red breeches of FREEMAN'S.

Old. What, interruption still ! O the plague of interruption ! worse to an author than the plague of critics. [*Aside.*

Wid. What's this I see ? Jerry Blackacre, my minor, in red breeches ! What, hast thou left the modest seemly garb of gown and cap for this ? and have I lost all my good Inns-of-Chancery breeding upon thee, then ? and thou wilt go a-breeding thyself from our Inn of Chancery and Westminster Hall, at coffee-houses and ordinaries, play-houses, and tennis-courts ?

Fer. Ay, ay, what then ? perhaps I will ; but what's that to you ? Here's my guardian and tutor now, forsooth, that I am out of your huckster's hands.

Wid. How ! thou hast not chosen him for thy guardian yet ?

Fer. No, but he has chosen me for his charge, and that's all one ; and I'll do anything he'll have me, and go all the world over with him ; to ordinaries, and play-houses, or anywhere else.

Wid. To ordinaries and play-houses ! have a care, minor, thou wilt enfeeble there thy estate and body ; do not go to ordinaries and play-houses, good Jerry.

Fer. Why, how come you to know any ill by play-houses ? You never had any hurt by 'em, had you, forsooth ? Pray hold yourself contented ; for you used me so unnaturally, you would never let me have a penny to go abroad with, nor so much as let me play at hotcockles with your maidens, nor have any recreation with 'em, you were so unnatural a mother, so you were.

Free. Ay, a very unnatural mother, faith, squire.

Wid. But, Jerry, consider thou art yet but a minor ; however, if thou wilt go home with me again, and be a good child, thou shalt see——

Free. Madam, I must have a better care of my heir under age, than so ; I would sooner trust him alone with a waiting-woman and a parson, than with his widow-mother and her lover or lawyer.

Wid. Why, thou villain, part mother and minor ! rob me of my child and my writings ! but thou shalt find there's law ; and as in the case of ravishment of guard—Westminster the Second.

Old. Young gentleman squire, pray be ruled by your mother and your friends.

Fer. Yes, I'll be ruled by my friends, therefore not by my mother, so I won't. I'll choose him for my guardian till I am of age ; nay, maybe, for as long as I live.

Wid. Wilt thou so, thou wretch ? and when thou'rt of age, thou wilt sign, seal, and deliver too, wilt thou ?

Fer. Yes, marry will I, if you go there too.

Wid. O do not squeeze wax, son ; rather go to ordinaries and play-houses, than squeeze wax. If thou dost that, farewell the goodly manor of Blackacre, with all its woods, underwoods, and appurtenances whatever ! Oh, oh ! *[Weeps.]*

Free. Come, madam, in short, you see I am resolved to have a share in the estate, yours or your son's ; if I cannot get you, I'll keep him, who is less coy, you find ; but if you would have your son again, you must take me too. Peace or war ? love or law ? You see my hostage is in my hand ; I'm in possession.

Wid. Nay, if one of us must be ruined, e'en let it be him. By my body, a good one ! Did you ever know yet a widow marry or not marry for the sake of her child ? I'd have you to know, sir, I shall be hard enough for you both yet, without marrying you, if Jerry won't be ruled by me. What say you, booby, will you be ruled : speak.

Fer. Let one alone, can't you ?

Wid. Wilt thou choose him for guardian, whom I refuse for husband ?

Fer. Ay, to choose, I thank you.

Wid. And are all my hopes frustrated ? Shall I never hear thee put cases again to John the butler, or our vicar ? never see thee amble the circuit with the judges ; and hear thee, in our town-hall, louder than the crier ?

Fer. No ; for I have taken my leave of lawyering and pettifogging.

Wid. Pettifogging ! thou profane villain, hast thou so ? Pettifogging—then you shall take your leave of me, and your estate too ; thou shalt be an alien to me and it for ever. Pettifogging !

Fer. O, but if you go there too, mother, we have the deeds and settlements, I thank you. Would you cheat me of my estate, i'fac ?

Wid. No, no, I will not cheat your little brother Bob ; for thou wert not born in wedlock.

Free. How's that ?

Fer. How ? what quirk has she got in her head now ?

Wid. I say, thou canst not, shall not, inherit the Blackacres estate.

Fer. Why ? why, forsooth ? What do you mean, if you go there too ?

Wid. Thou art but my base child ; and according to the law, canst not inherit it. Nay, thou art not so much as bastard *eigne*.

Fer. What, what am I, mother ?

Wid. The law says—

Free. Madam, we know what the law says ; but have a care what you say. Do not let your passion to ruin your son ruin your reputation.

Wid. Hang reputation, sir ! Am not I a widow ? have no husband, nor intend to have any ? Nor would you, I suppose, now have me for a wife. So I think now I'm revenged on my son and you, without marrying, as I told you.

Free. But consider, madam.

Fer. What, have you no shame left in you, mother?

Wid. Wonder not at it, major. 'Tis often the poor pressed widow's case, to give up her honour to save her jointure; and seem to be a light woman, rather than marry. *[Aside to OLDFOX.]*

Free. But one word with you, madam.

Wid. No, no, sir. Come, major, let us make haste now to the Prerogative Court.

Old. But, lady, if what you say be true, will you stigmatize your reputation on record? and if it be not true, how will you prove it?

Wid. Pshaw! I can prove anything; and for my reputation, know, major, a wise woman will no more value her reputation, in disinheriting a rebellious son of a good estate, than she would in getting him to inherit an estate. *[Exeunt WIDOW and OLDFOX.]*

Free. Madam— We must not let her go so, squire.

Fer. Nay, the devil can't stop her though, if she has a mind to't. But come, bully-guardian, we'll go and advise with three attorneys, two proctors, two solicitors, and a shrewd man of Whitefriars, neither attorney, proctor, or solicitor, but as pure a cub of the law as any of 'em; and sure all they will be hard enough for her, for I fear, bully-guardian, you are too good a joker to have any law in your head. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—OLIVIA'S Lodging.

Enter LORD PLAUSIBLE and BOY with a candle.

Plaus. Little gentleman, your most obedient, faithful, humble servant. Where, I beseech you, is that divine person, your noble lady?

Boy. Gone out, my lord; but commanded me to give you this letter. *[Gives him a letter.]*

Enter NOVEL.

Plaus. Which he must not observe. *[Aside. Puts it up.]*

Nov. Hey, boy, where is thy lady?

Boy. Gone out, sir; but I must beg a word with you. *[Gives him a letter, and exit.]*

Nov. For me? So.—*[Puts up the Letter.]* Servant, servant, my lord; you see the lady knew of your coming, for she is gone out.

Plaus. Sir, I humbly beseech you not to censure the lady's good breeding; she has reason to use more liberty with me than with any other man.

Nov. How, viscount, how?

Plaus. Nay, I humbly beseech you, be not in choler: where there is most love, there may be most freedom.

Nov. Nay, then 'tis time to come to an *eclaircissement* with you, and to tell you, you must think no more of this lady's love.

Plaus. Why, under correction, dear sir?

Nov. There are reasons, reasons, viscount.

Plaus. What, I beseech you, noble sir?

Nov. Prithee, prithee, be not impertinent, my lord; some of you lords are such conceited, well-assured, impertinent rogues.

Plaus. And you noble wits are so full of shamming and drolling, one knows not where to have you seriously.

Nov. Prithee, my lord, be not an ass. Dost thou think to get her from me? I have had such encouragements—

Plaus. I have not been thought unworthy of 'em.

Nov. What, not like mine! Come to an *eclaircissement*, as I said.

Plaus. Why, seriously then, she has told me viscountess sounded prettily.

Nov. And me, that Novel was a name she would sooner change hers for than for any title in England.

Plaus. She has commended the softness and respectfulness of my behaviour.

Nov. She has praised the briskness of my rillery, of all things, man.

Plaus. The sleepiness of my eyes she liked.

Nov. Sleepiness! dulness, dulness. But the fierceness of mine she adored.

Plaus. The brightness of my hair she liked.

Nov. The brightness! no, the greasiness, I warrant. But the blackness and lustre of mine she admires.

Plaus. The gentleness of my smile.

Nov. The subtlety of my leer.

Plaus. The clearness of my complexion.

Nov. The redness of my lips.

Plaus. The whiteness of my teeth.

Nov. My jaunty way of picking them.

Plaus. The sweetness of my breath.

Nov. Ha! ha! nay, then she abused you, 'tis plain; for you know what Manly said:—the sweetness of your pulvillio she might mean; but for your breath! ha! ha! ha! Your breath is such, man, that nothing but tobacco can perfume; and your complexion nothing could mend but the small-pox.

Plaus. Well, sir, you may please to be merry; but, to put you out of all doubt, sir, she has received some jewels from me of value.

Nov. And presents from me; besides what I presented her jauntily, by way of ombre, of three or four hundred pounds value, which I'm sure are the earnest-pence for our love-bargain.

Plaus. Nay, then, sir, with your favour, and to make an end of all your hopes, look you there, sir, she has writ to me—

Nov. How! how! well, well, and so she has to me; look you there—

[*Deliver to each other their letters.*]

Plaus. What's here?

Nov. How's this?

[*Reads out.*—*My dear Lord,—You'll excuse me for breaking my word with you, since 'twas to oblige, not offend you; for I am only gone abroad but to disappoint Novel, and meet you in the drawing-room; where I expect you with as much impatience as when I used to suffer Novel's visits—the most impertinent fop that ever affected the name of a wit, therefore not capable, I hope, to give you jealousy; for, for your sake alone, you saw I renounced an old lover, and will do all the world. Burn the letter, but lay up the kindness of it in your heart, with your—*OLIVIA.

Very fine, but pray let's see mine.

Plaus. I understand it not; but sure she cannot think so of me.

Nov. [*Reads the other letter.*] Hum! ha!—*meet—for your sake—hum—quitted an old lover—world—burn—in your heart—with your—*OLIVIA.

Just the same, the names only altered.

Plaus. Surely there must be some mistake, or somebody has abused her and us.

Nov. Yes, you are abused, no doubt on't, my lord; but I'll to Whitehall and see.

Plaus. And I, where I shall find you are abused.

Nov. Where, if it be so, for our comfort, we cannot fail of meeting with fellow-sufferers enough; for, as Freeman said of another, she stands in the drawing-room, like the glass, ready for all comers, to set their gallantry by her; and, like the glass too, lets no man go from her unsatisfied with himself. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter OLIVIA and BOY.

Oliv. Both here, and just gone?

Boy. Yes, madam.

Oliv. But are you sure neither saw you deliver the other a letter?

Boy. Yes, yes, madam, I am very sure.

Oliv. Go then to the Old Exchange, to Westminster, Holborn, and all the other places I told you off; I shall not need you these two hours. Begone, and take the candle with you, and be sure you leave word again below, I am gone out, to all that ask.

Boy. Yes, madam.

[*Exit.*]

Oliv. And my new lover will not ask, I'm sure. He has his lesson, and cannot miss me here, though in the dark; which I have purposely designed, as a remedy against my blushing gallant's modesty, for young lovers, like game cocks, are made bolder by being kept without light.

Enter VERNISH, as from a journey.

Ver. Where is she? Darkness everywhere!

[*Softly.*]

Oliv. What! come before your time! My soul! my life! your haste has augmented your kindness; and let me thank you for it thus, and thus.—[*Embracing and kissing him.*] And though, my soul, the little time since you left me has seemed an age to my impatience, sure it is yet but seven—

Ver. How! who's that you expected after seven?

Oliv. Ha! my husband returned! and have I been throwing away so many kind kisses on my husband, and wronged my lover already?

[*Aside.*

Ver. Speak, I say. Who was't you expected after seven?

Oliv. [*aside*]. What shall I say?—oh. [*Aloud.*—Why, 'tis but seven days, is it, dearest, since you went out of town? and I expected you not so soon.

Ver. No, sure, 'tis but five days since I left you.

Oliv. Pardon my impatience, dearest, I thought 'em seven at least.

Ver. Nay, then—

Oliv. But, my life, you shall never stay half so long from me again; you shan't indeed, by this kiss you shan't.

Ver. No, no; but why alone in the dark?

Oliv. Blame not my melancholy in your absence; but, my soul, since you went, I have strange news to tell you: Manly is returned.

Ver. Manly returned! Fortune forbid!

Oliv. Met with the Dutch in the Channel, fought, sunk his ship, and all he carried with him. He was here with me yesterday.

Ver. And did you own our marriage to him?

Oliv. I told him I was married to put an end to his love and my trouble; but to whom, is yet a secret kept from him and all the world. And I have used him so scurvily, his great spirit will ne'er return to reason it farther with me: I have sent him to sea again, I warrant.

Ver. 'Twas bravely done. And sure he will now hate the shore more than ever, after so great a disappointment. Be you sure only to keep a while our great secret, till he be gone. In the meantime, I'll lead the easy, honest fool by the nose, as I used to do; and whilst he stays, rail with him at thee; and when he's gone, laugh with thee at him. But have you his cabinet of jewels safe? part not with a seed-pearl to him, to keep him from starving.

Oliv. Nor from hanging.

Ver. He cannot recover 'em; and, I think, will scorn to beg 'em again.

Oliv. But, my life, have you taken the thousand guineas he left in my name out of the goldsmith's hands?

Ver. Ay, ay; they are removed to another goldsmith's.

Oliv. Ay, but, my soul, you had best have a care he find not where the money is; for his present wants, as I'm informed, are such as will make him inquisitive enough.

Ver. You say true, and he knows the man too; but I'll remove it to-morrow.

Oliv. To-morrow! O do not stay till to-morrow; go to-night, immediately.

Ver. Now I think on't, you advise well, and I will go presently.

Oliv. Presently! instantly! I will not let you stay a jot.

Ver. I will then, though I return not home till twelve.

Oliv. Nay, though not till morning, with all my heart. Go, dearest; I am impatient till you are gone.—*[Thrusts him out.]* So, I have at once now brought about those two grateful businesses, which all prudent women do together, secured money and pleasure; and now all interruptions of the last are removed. Go husband, and come up, friend; just the buckets in the well; the absence of one brings the other. But I hope, like them too, they will not meet in the way, jostle, and clash together.

Enter FIDELIA and MANLY, treading softly and staying behind at some distance.

So, are you come? (but not the husband-bucket, I hope, again.)—Who's there? my dearest? *[Softly.]*

Fid. My life—

Oliv. Right, right.—Where are thy lips! Here, take the dumb and best welcomes, kisses and embraces; 'tis not a time for idle words. In a duel of love, as in others, parleying shows basely. Come, we are alone.

Man. How's this? Why, she makes love like a devil in a play; and in this darkness, which conceals her angel's face, if I were apt to be afraid, I should think her a devil. *[Aside.]*

Oliv. What, you traverse ground, young gentleman! *[FIDELIA avoiding her.]*

Fid. I take breath only.

Man. Good heavens! how was I deceived! *[Assde.]*

Oliv. Nay, you are a coward; what, are you afraid of the fierceness of my love?

Fid. Yes, madam, lest its violence might presage its change; and I must needs be afraid you would leave me quickly, who could desert so brave a gentleman as Manly.

Oliv. O, name not his name!

Fid. But did you not love him?

Oliv. Never. How could you think it?

Fid. Because he thought it; who is a man of that sense, nice discerning, and diffidency, that I should think it hard to deceive him.

Oliv. No; he that distrusts most the world, trusts most to himself, and is but the more easily deceived, because he thinks he can't be deceived. His cunning is like the coward's sword, by which he is oftener worsted than defended.

Fid. Yet, sure, you used no common art to deceive him.

Oliv. I knew he loved his own singular moroseness so well, as to dote upon any copy of it; wherefore I feigned a hatred to the world too, that he might love me in earnest; but, if it had been hard to deceive him, I'm sure 'twere much harder to love him. A dogged, ill-mannered—

Fid. D'ye hear, sir? pray, hear her. *[Aside to MANLY.]*

Oliv. Surly, untractable, snarling brute! He! a mastiff dog were as fit a thing to make a gallant of.

Man. Ay, a goat, or monkey, were fitter for thee. [Aside.]

Fid. I must confess, for my part, though my rival, I cannot but say he has a manly handsomeness in's face and mien.

Oliv. So has a Saracen in the sign.

Fid. Is proper, and well made.

Oliv. As a drayman.

Fid. Has wit.

Oliv. He rails at all mankind.

Fid. And undoubted courage.

Oliv. Like the hangman's; can murder a man when his hands are tied. He has cruelty indeed; which is no more courage than his railing is wit.

Man. Thus women, and men like women, are too hard for us, when they think we do not hear 'em. [Aside.]

Fid. He is——

Oliv. Prithce, no more of him; I thought I had satisfied you enough before, that he could never be a rival for you to apprehend. And you need not be more assured of my aversion to him, than by the testimony of my love to you. Come, my soul, this way.

Fid. But, madam, what could make you dissemble love to him, when 'twas so hard a thing for you; and flatter his love to you?

Oliv. That which makes all the world flatter and dissemble, 'twas his money: I had a real passion for that. Yet I loved not that so well, as for it to take him; for as soon as I had his money I hastened his departure like a wife, who when she has made the most of a dying husband's breath, pulls away his pillow.

Man. Damned money! its master's potent rival still; and corrupts itself the mistress it procures for us. [Aside.]

Oliv. But I did not think with you, my life, to pass my time in talking. Come hither, come; yet stay, till I have locked a door in the other room, that may chance to let us in some interruption; which reciting poets or losing gamesters fear not more than I at this time do. [Exit.]

Fid. Well, I hope you are now satisfied, sir, and will be gone to think of your revenge?

Man. No, I am not satisfied, and must stay to be revenged.

Fid. How, sir? You'll use no violence to her, I hope, and forfeit your own life, to take away hers? that were no revenge.

Man. No, no, you need not fear: my revenge shall only be upon her honour, not her life.

Fid. How, sir? her honour? O heavens! consider, sir, she has no honour. D'ye call that revenge? can you think of such a thing? But reflect, sir, how she hates and loathes you. No, sir, no; to be revenged on her now, were to disappoint her. Pray, sir, let us begone. [Pulls MANLY]

Man. Hold off! What, you are my rival then! and therefore you shall stay, and keep the door for me, whilst I go in for you.

but when I'm gone, if you dare to stir off from this very board, or breathe the least murmuring accent, I'll cut her throat first ; and if you love her, you will not venture her life.—Nay, then I'll cut your throat too ; and I know you love your own life at least.

Fid. But, sir ; good sir.

Man. Not a word more, lest I begin my revenge on her by killing you.

Fid. But are you sure 'tis revenge that makes you do this ? how can it be ?

Man. Whist !

Fid. 'Tis a strange revenge, indeed.

Man. If you make me stay, I shall keep my word, and begin with you. No more. [*Exit at the same door OLIVIA went out by.*]

Fid. O heavens ! is there not punishment enough

In loving well, if you will have't a crime,
But you must add fresh torments daily to't,
And punish us like peevish rivals still,
Because we fain would find a heaven here ?
But did there never any love like me,
That untried tortures you must find me out ?
Others at worst, you force to kill themselves ;
But I must be self-murderess of my love,
Yet will not grant me power to end my life,
My cruel life ; for when a lover's hopes
Are dead and gone, life is unmerciful.

[*Sits down and weeps.*]

Re-enter MANLY.

Man. I have thought better on't : I must not discover myself now I am without witnesses ; for if I barely should publish it, she would deny it with impudence. Where are you ?

Fid. Here—oh—now I suppose we may be gone.

Man. I will ; but not you. You must stay and act the second part of a lover, that is, talk kindness to her.

Fid. Not I, sir.

Man. No disputing, sir, you must ; 'tis necessary to my design of coming again to-morrow night.

Fid. What, can you come again then hither ?

Man. Yes ; and you must make the appointment, and an apology for your leaving her so soon ; for I have said not a word to her ; but have kept your counsel, as I expect you should do mine. Do this faithfully, and I promise you here, you shall run my fortune still, and we will never part as long as we live ; but if you do not do it, expect not to live.

Fid. 'Tis hard, sir ; but such a consideration will make it easier. You won't forget your promise, sir ?

Man. No, by heavens. But I hear her coming

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter OLIVIA.

Oliv. Where is my life? Run from me already! You do not love me, dearest; nay, you are angry with me, for you would not so much as speak a kind word to me within: what was the reason?

Fid. I was transported too much.

Oliv. That's kind. But come, my soul, what make you here? Let us go in again; we may be surprised in this room, 'tis so near the stairs.

Fid. No, we shall hear the better here, if anybody should come up.

Oliv. Nay, I assure you, we shall be secure enough within: come, come——

Fid. I am sick, and troubled with a sudden dizziness; and cannot stir yet.

Oliv. Come, I have spirits within.

Fid. O! don't you hear a noise, madam?

Oliv. No, no; there is none: come, come.

Fid. Indeed there is; and I love you so much, I must have a care of your honour, if you won't, and go; but to come to you to-morrow night, if you please.

Oliv. With all my soul. But you must not go yet; come, prithee.

Fid. Oh!—I'm now sicker, and am afraid of one of my fits.

Oliv. What fits?

Fid. Of the falling sickness; and I lie generally an hour in a trance: therefore pray consider your honour for the sake of my love, and let me go, that I may return to you often.

Oliv. But will you be sure then to come to-morrow night?

Fid. Yes.

Oliv. Swear.

Fid. By our past kindness.

Oliv. Well, go your ways then, if you will, you naughty creature you.—[*Exit FIDELIA.*] These young lovers, with their fears and modesty, make themselves as bad as old ones to us; and I apprehend their bashfulness more than their tattling.

Re-enter FIDELIA.

Fid. O madam, we're undone! There was a gentleman upon the stairs, coming up with a candle, which made me retire. Look you, here he comes!

Re-enter VERNISH and his SERVANT, with a light.

Oliv. How, my husband! Oh, undone indeed! This way.

Ver. Ha! you shall not escape me so, sir. [*Exit.*]
[*Stops FIDELIA.*]

Fid. O heavens! more fears, plagues and torments yet in store!
[*Aside.*]

Ver. Come, sir, I guess what your business was here, but this must be your business now. Draw. [*Draws.*]

Fid. Sir—

Ver. No expostulations ; I shall not care to hear of't. Draw.

Fid. Good sir !

Ver. How, you rascal ! not courage to draw ; yet durst do me the greatest injury in the world ? Thy cowardice shall not save thy life. [*Offers to run at FIDELIA.*]

Fid. O hold, sir, and send but your servant down, and I'll satisfy you, sir, I could not injure you as you imagine.

Ver. Leave the light and begone.—[*Exit SERVANT.*] Now, quickly, sir, what have you to say, or—

Fid. I am a woman, sir, a very unfortunate woman.

Ver. How ! a very handsome woman, I'm sure then ; here are witnesses of it too, I confess. [*Aside.*—Well, I'm glad to find the tables turned ; my wife is in more danger of cuckolding than I was.

Fid. Now, sir, I hope you are so much a man of honour as to let me go, now I have satisfied you, sir.

Ver. When you have satisfied me, madam, I will.

Fid. I hope, sir, you are too much a gentleman to urge those secrets from a woman which concern her honour. You may guess my misfortune to be love, by my disguise.

Ver. I may believe love has changed your outside, which could not wrong me ; but why did my wife run away ?

Fid. I know not, sir ; perhaps because she would not be forced to discover me to you, or to guide me from your suspicions, that you might not discover me yourself ; which ungentlemanlike curiosity I hope you will cease to have, and let me go.

Ver. Well, madam, if I must not know who you are, 'twill suffice for me only to know certainly what you are ; which you must not deny me. Come.

Fid. Oh ! what d'ye mean ? Help ! oh !

Ver. I'll show you ; but 'tis in vain to cry out : no one dares help you ; for I am lord here.

Fid. Tyrant here !—But if you are master of this house, which I have taken for a sanctuary, do not violate it yourself.

Ver. No ; I'll preserve you here, and nothing shall hurt you, and will be as true to you as your disguise ; but you must trust me then. Come, come.

Fid. Oh ! oh ! rather than you should drag me to a death so horrid and so shameful, I'll die here a thousand deaths. Oh ! oh ! help ! help !

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ver. You saucy rascal, how durst you come in ? When you heard a woman squeak, that should have been your cue to shut the door.

Serv. I come, sir, to let you know, the alderman coming home

L

immediately after you were at his house, has sent his cashier with the money, according to your note.

Ver. Plague on his money! Money never came to any, sure, unseasonably till now. Bid him stay.

Serv. He says, he cannot a moment.

Ver. Receive it you then.

Serv. He says he must have your receipt for it; he is in haste, for I hear him coming up, sir.

Ver. Help me in here then with this dishonourer of my family.

Fid. Oh! oh!

Serv. You say she is a woman, sir.

Ver. No matter, sir; must you prate?

Fid. Oh Heavens! Is there——

[*They thrust her in, and lock the door.*]

Ver. Stay there, my prisoner; you have a short reprieve.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ELIZA'S Lodgings.

Enter OLIVIA and ELIZA.

Oliv. Ah, cousin! nothing troubles me but that I have given the malicious world its revenge, and reason now to talk as freely of me as I used to do of it.

Eliza. Faith, then, let not that trouble you; for, to be plain, cousin, the world cannot talk worse of you than it did before.

Oliv. How, cousin! I'd have you to know, before this *faux pas*, this trip of mine, the world could not talk of me.

Eliza. Only that you mind other people's actions so much that you take no care of your own, but to hide 'em; that, like a thief, because you know yourself most guilty, you impeach your fellow-criminals first, to clear yourself.

Oliv. O wicked world!

Eliza. That you pretend an aversion to all mankind in public, only that their wives and mistresses may not be jealous, and hinder you of their conversation in private

Oliv. Base world!

Eliza. That abroad you fasten quarrels upon innocent men for talking of you, only to bring 'em to ask your pardon at home, and to become dear friends with them, who were hardly your acquaintance before.

Oliv. Abominable world!

Eliza. That you deface the nudities of pictures, and little statues, only because they are not real.

Oliv. O, fie, fie, fie! hideous, hideous! Cousin, the obscenity of their censures makes me blush!

Eliza. The truth of 'em, the naughty world would say now.

Enter LETTICE, hastily.

Let. O, madam ! here is that gentleman coming up who now you say is my master.

Oliv. O, cousin ! whither shall I run ? Protect me, or——
[*OLIVIA runs away, and stands at a distance.*]

Enter VERNISH.

Ver. Nay, nay, come——

Oliv. O, sir, forgive me !

Ver. Yes, yes ; I can forgive you being alone in the dark with a woman in man's clothes ; but have a care of a man in woman's clothes.

Oliv. What does he mean ? He dissembles only to get me into his power ; or has my dear friend made him believe he was a woman ? My husband may be deceived by him, but I'm sure I was not. [Aside.]

Ver. Come, come, you need not have lain out of your house for this. But perhaps you were afraid, when I was warm with suspicions ; you must have discovered who she was. And, prithee, may I not know it ?

Oliv. She was !——[Aside.]—I hope he has been deceived ; and since my lover has played the card I must not renounce.

Ver. Come, what's the matter with thee ? If I must not know who she is, I'm satisfied without. Come hither.

Oliv. Sure you do know her. She has told you herself, I suppose.

Ver. No. I might have known her better but that I was interrupted by the goldsmith, you know, and was forced to lock her into your chamber, to keep her from his sight ; but, when I returned, I found she was got away by tying the window-curtains to the balcony, by which she slid down into the street. For, you must know, I jested with her, and made her believe what she apprehended, it seems, in earnest.

Oliv. Then she got from you ?

Ver. Yes.

Oliv. And is quite gone.

Ver. Yes.

Oliv. I'm glad on't. What ! there's guilt in your face ; you blush, too. I could tear out those false eyes, barbarous, unworthy wretch !

Eliza. So, so !

Ver. Prithee hear, my dear.

Oliv. I will never hear you, my plague, my torment !

Ver. I swear—prithee, hear me.

Oliv. I have heard already too many of your false oaths and vows, especially your last in the church. O wicked man ! and

wretched woman that I was ! I wish I had then sunk down into a grave, rather than to have given you my hand. Oh—oh.

[*Pretends to weep.*]

Ver. So, very fine ! just a marriage-quarrel ! which though it generally begins by the wife's fault, yet, in the conclusion, it becomes the husband's ; and whosoever offends at first, he only is sure to ask pardon at last. My dear——

Oliv. Wretch !——

Ver. Come, prithee be appeased, and go home ; I have bespoken our supper betimes : for I could not eat till I found you. Go, I'll give you all kind of satisfactions ; and one, which uses to be a reconciling one, two hundred of those guineas I received last night, to do what you will with.

Oliv. What, would you pay me.

Ver. Nay, prithee no more ; go, and I'll thoroughly satisfy you when I come home ; and then, too, we will have a fit of laughter at Manly, whom I am going to find at the Cock, in Bow Street, where I hear he dined. Go, dearest, go home.

Eliza. A very pretty turn, indeed, this !

[*Aside.*]

Ver. Now, cousin, since by my wife I have that honour and privilege of calling you so, I have something to beg of you too ; which is not to take notice of our marriage to any whatever yet awhile, for some reasons very important to me. And next, that you will do my wife the honour to go home with her ; and me the favour to use that power you have with her in our reconciliation.

Eliza. That I dare promise, sir, will be no hard matter. Your servant.—[*Exit VERNISH.*] Well, cousin, this, I confess, was reasonable hypocrisy ; you were the better for't.

Oliv. What hypocrisy ?

Eliza. Why, this last, deceit of your husband was lawful, since in your own defence.

Oliv. What deceit ? I'd have you to know I never deceived my husband.

Eliza. You do not understand me, sure ; I say, this was an honest come-off, and a good one. But 'twas a sign your gallant had had enough of your conversation, since he could so dexterously cheat your husband in passing for a woman.

Oliv. What d'ye mean, once more : with my gallant, and passing for a woman ?

Eliza. What do you mean ? you see your husband took him for a woman.

Oliv. Whom !

Eliza. Heyday ! why, the man he found you with, for whom last night you were so much afraid, and who you told me——

Oliv. Lord, you rave sure !

Eliza. Why, did not you tell me last night——

Oliv. I know not what I might tell you last night, in a fright.

Eliza. Ay, what was that fright for ? for a woman ? besides, were you not afraid to see your husband just now ? Nay, did you not

just now, too, own your false step, or trip, as you called it? which was with a woman too! fy, this fooling is so insipid, 'tis offensive!

Oliv. And fooling with my honour will be more offensive. Did you not hear my husband say he found me with a woman in man's clothes? and d'ye think he does not know a man from a woman?

Eliza. Not so well, I'm sure, as you do; therefore I'd rather take your word.

Oliv. What, you grow scurrilous, and are, I find, more censorious than the world! I must have a care of you, I see.

Eliza. No, you need not fear yet, I'll keep your secret.

Oliv. My secret! I'd have you to know, I have no need of confidants, though you value yourself upon being a good one.

Eliza. O admirable confidence! you show more in denying your wickedness, than other people in glorying in't.

Oliv. Confidence, to me! to me such language! nay, then I'll never see your face again. [*Aside.*—I'll quarrel with her, that people may never believe I was in her power; but take for malice all the truth she may speak against me. [*Aloud.*—Lettice, where are you? Let us be gone from this censorious ill woman.

Eliza. [*aside.*] Nay, thou shalt stay a little, to forswear thyself quite. [*Aloud.*—One word first, pray, madam; can you swear that whom your husband found you with—

Oliv. Swear! ay, that whosoever 'twas that stole up, unknown, into my room, when 'twas dark, I know not, whether man or woman, by heavens, by all that's good; or, may I never more have joys here, or in the other world! Nay, may I eternally—

Eliza. Be lost. So, so, you are lost enough already by your oaths; and I enough confirmed, and now you may please to be gone. Yet take this advice with you, in this plain-dealing age, to leave off forswearing yourself; for when people hardly think the better of a woman for her real modesty, why should you put that great constraint upon yourself to feign it?

Oliv. O hideous, hideous advice! let us go out of the hearing of it. She will spoil us, Lettice.

[*Exeunt OLIVIA and LETTICE at one door, ELIZA at the other.*

SCENE II.—*The Cock in Bow Street.—A Table and Bottles.*

Enter MANLY and FIDELIA.

Man. How! saved her honour by making her husband believe you were a woman! 'Twas well, but hard enough to do, sure.

Fid. We were interrupted before he could contradict me.

Man. But can't you tell me, d'ye say, what kind of man he was?

Fid. I was so frightened, I confess, I can give no other account of him, but that he was pretty tall, round-faced, and one, I'm sure, I ne'er had seen before.

Man. But she, you say, made you swear to return to-night?

Fid. But I have since sworn, never to go near her again ; for the husband would murder me, or worse, if he caught me again.

Man. No, I will go with you, and defend you to-night, and then I'll swear, too, never to go near her again.

Fid. Nay, indeed, sir, I will not go, to be accessory to your death too. Besides, what should you go again, sir, for?

Man. No disputing, or advice, sir ; you have reason to know I am unalterable. Go therefore presently, and write her a note, to inquire if her assignation with you holds ; and if not to be at her own house, where else ; and be importunate to gain admittance to her to-night. Let your messenger, ere he deliver your letter, inquire first if her husband be gone out. Go, 'tis now almost six of the clock ; I expect you back here before seven, with leave to see her then. Go, do this dexterously, and expect the performance of my last night's promise, never to part with you.

Fid. Ay, sir ; but will you be sure to remember that ?

Man. Did I ever break my word ? Go, no more replies, or doubts. [Exit FIDELIA.]

Enter FREEMAN.

Where hast thou been ?

Free. In the next room, with my Lord Plausible and Novel.

Man. Ay, we came hither, because 'twas a private house ; but with thee indeed no house can be private, for thou hast that pretty quality of the familiar fops of the town, who, in an eating-house, always keep company with all people in't but those they came with.

Free. I went into their room, but to keep them, and my own fool, the squire, out of your room ; but you shall be peevish now, because you have no money. But why won't you write to those we were speaking of ? Since your modesty, or your spirit, will not suffer you to speak to 'em, to lend you money, why won't you try 'em at last that way ?

Man. Because I know 'em already, and can bear want better than denials, nay, than obligations.

Free. Deny you ! they cannot. All of 'em have been your intimate friends.

Man. No, they have been people only I have obliged particularly.

Free. Very well ; therefore you ought to go to 'em the rather sure.

Man. No, no. Those you have obliged most, most certainly avoid you, when you can oblige 'em no longer ; and they take your visits like so many duns.

Free. Pshaw ! but most of 'em are your relations ; men of great fortune and honour.

Man. Yes ; but relations have so much honour as to think poverty taints the blood, and disown their wanting kindred ; believing, I suppose, that as riches at first make a gentleman, the

want of 'em degrades him. But now I am poor, I'll anticipate their contempt, and disown them.

Free. Well, but noble captain, would you make me believe that you, who know half the town, have so many friends, and have obliged so many, can't borrow fifty or a hundred pounds?

Man. Why, noble lieutenant, you who know all the town, and call all you know friends, methinks should not wonder at it, since you find ingratitude too. For how many lords' families (though descended from blacksmiths or tinkers) hast thou called great and illustrious? how many ill tables called good eating? how many noisy coxcombs wits? how many pert coaching cowards stout? how many tawdry affected rogues well-dressed? how many perukes admired? and how many ill verses applauded? and yet canst not borrow a shilling. Dost thou expect I, who always spoke truth, should?

Free. Nay, now you think you have paid me; but hark you, captain, I have heard of a thing called grinning honour, but never of starving honour.

Man. Well, but it has been the fate of some brave men; and if they won't give me a ship again, I can go starve anywhere with a musket on my shoulder.

Free. Give you a ship! why, you will not solicit it.

Man. If I have not solicited it by my services, I know no other way.

Free. Your servant, sir; nay, then I'm satisfied, I must solicit my widow the closer, and run the desperate fortune of matrimony on shore. [Exit.]

Enter VERNISH.

Man. How!—Nay, here is a friend indeed; and he that has him in his arms can know no wants. [Embraces VERNISH.]

Ver. Dear Sir! and he that is in your arms is secure from all fears whatever; nay, our nation is secure by your defeat at sea, and the Dutch that fought against you have proved enemies to themselves only in bringing you back to us.

Man. Fie! fie! this from a friend? and yet from any other 'twere insufferable; I thought I should never have taken anything ill from you.

Ver. A friend's privilege is to speak his mind, though it be taken ill.

Man. But your tongue need not tell me you think too well of me; I have found it from your heart, which spoke in actions, your unalterable heart. But Olivia is false, my friend, which I suppose is no news to you.

Ver. He's in the right on't.

[Aside.]

Man. But couldst thou not keep her true to me?

Ver. Not for my heart, sir.

Man. But could you not perceive it at all before I went; could she so deceive us both?

Ver. I must confess, the first time I knew it was three days after your departure, when she received the money you had left in Lombard Street in her name ; and her tears did not hinder her, it seems, from counting that. You would trust her with all, like a true generous lover.

Man. And she like a mean jilting——

Ver. Traitorous——

Man. Base——

Ver. Vile——

Man. Covetous——

Ver. Mercenary.—[*Aside.*] I can hardly hold from laughing.

Man. Ay, mercenary, indeed ; for she made me pay last night.

Ver. When ?

Man. Last night, about seven or eight of the clock.

Ver. Ha !—[*Aside.*] Now I remember, I thought she spake as if she expected some other rather than me. Traitorous, indeed !

Man. But what, thou wonderest at it ? nay, you seem to be angry too.

Ver. I cannot but be enraged against her, for her usage of you : infamous jade !

Mar. But thou dost not, for so great a friend, take pleasure enough in your friend's revenge, methinks.

Ver. Yes, yes ; I'm glad to know it.

Man. Thou canst not tell who that poor rascal, her husband is ?

Ver. No.

Man. She would keep it from you, I suppose.

Ver. Yes, yes.

Man. Thou wouldst laugh, if thou knewest but all the circumstances. Come, I'll tell thee.

Ver. Out on her ! I care not to hear any more of her.

Man. Faith, thou shalt. You must know——

Re-enter FREEMAN backwards, endeavouring to keep out NOVEL, LORD PLAUSIBLE, JERRY and OLDFOX, who all press upon him.

Free. I tell you he would be private.

Man. So ! a man can't open a bottle in these eating-houses, but presently you have these impudent, intruding, buzzing flies and insects in your glass.—Well, I'll tell thee all anon. In the meantime, prithee go to her, but not from me, and try if you can get her to lend me but a hundred pounds of my money, to supply my present wants ; for I suppose there is no recovering any of it by law.

Ver. Not any ; think not of it. Nor by this way neither.

Man. Go try, at least.

Ver. I'll go ; but I can satisfy you beforehand it will be to no purpose.

Man. However, try her ; put it to her.

Ver. Ay, ay, I'll try her ; put it to her home with a vengeance.

[*Exit.*]

Nov. Nay, you shall be our judge, Manly.—Come, major, I'll speak it to your teeth ; if people provoke me to say bitter things to their faces, they must take what follows ; though, like my Lord Plausible, I'd rather do't civilly behind their backs.

Man. Nay, thou art a dangerous rogue, I've heard, behind a man's back.

Plaus. You wrong him sure, noble captain ; he would do a man no more harm behind his back than to his face.

Free. I am of my lord's mind.

Man. Yes, a fool, like a coward, is the more to be feared behind a man's back more than a witty man ; for, as a coward is more bloody than a brave man, a fool is more malicious than a man of wit.

Nov. A fool, tar,—a fool ! nay, thou art a brave sea-judge of wit ! a fool ! Prithce when did you ever find me want something to say, as you do often ?

Man. Nay, I confess thou art always talking, roaring, or making a noise ; that I'll say for thee.

Nov. Well, and is talking a sign of a fool ?

Man. Yes, always talking, especially too if it be loud and fast, is the sign of a fool.

Nov. Pshaw ! talking is like fencing, the quicker the better ; run 'em down, run 'em down, no matter for parrying ; push on still, sa, sa, sa ! No matter whether you argue in form, push in guard or no.

Man. Or hit or no ; I think thou always talkest without thinking, Novel.

Nov. Ay, ay ; studied play's the worst, to follow the allegory, as the old pedant says.

Old. A young fop !

Man. I ever thought the man of most wit had been like him of most money, who has no vanity in showing it everywhere, whilst the beggarly pusher of his fortune has all he has about him still only to show.

Nov. Well, sir, and make a very pretty show in the world, let me tell you ; nay, a better than your close hunks. Give me ready money in play ! what care I for a man's reputation ? what are we the better for your substantial thrifty curmudgeon in wit, sir ?

Old. Thou art a profuse young rogue indeed.

Nov. So much for talking, which, I think, I have proved a mark of wit ; and so is railing, roaring, and making a noise ; for railing is satire, you know ; and roaring and making a noise, humour.

Re-enter FIDELIA ; she takes MANLY aside, and shows him a paper.

Fid. The hour is betwixt seven and eight exactly : 'tis now half an hour after six.

Man. Well, go then to the Piazza, and wait for me : as soon as it is quite dark, I'll be with you. I must stay here yet a while for my friend.—[*Exit FIDELIA.*] But is railing satire, Novel ?

Free. And roaring and making a noise, humour.

Nov. What, won't you confess there's humour in roaring and making a noise?

Free. No.

Nov. Nor in cutting napkins and hangings?

Man. No, sure.

Nov. Dull fops!

Old. O rogue, rogue, insipid rogue!—Nay, gentlemen, allow him those things for wit; for his parts lie only that way.

Nov. Peace, old fool! I wonder not at thee; but that young fellows should be so dull as to say there's no humour in making a noise, and breaking windows! I tell you there's wit and humour too in both; and a wit is as well known by his frolic as by his smile.

Old. Pure rogue! there's your modern wit for you! Wit and humour in breaking of windows! there's mischief, if you will, but no wit or humour.

Nov. Prithee, prithee, peace, old fool! I tell you, where there's mischief, there's wit. Don't we esteem the monkey a wit amongst beasts, only because he's mischievous? and, let me tell you, as good-nature is a sign of a fool, being mischievous is a sign of a wit.

Old. O rogue, rogue! pretend to be a wit, by doing mischief and railing!

Nov. Why thou, old fool, hast no other pretence to the name of a wit, but by railing at new plays!

Old. Thou, by railing at that facetious noble way of wit, quibbling?

Nov. Thou callest thy dulness gravity; and thy dozing, thinking.

Old. You, sir, your dulness, spleen; and you talk much and say nothing.

Nov. Thou readest much, and understandest nothing, sir.

Old. You laugh loud, and break no jest.

Nov. You rail, and nobody hangs himself; and thou hast nothing of the satire but in thy face.

Old. And you have no jest but your face, sir.

Nov. Thou art an illiterate pedant.

Old. Thou art a fool with a bad memory.

Man. Come, a plague on you both! you have done like wits now: for you wits, when you quarrel, never give over till ye prove one another fools.

Nov. And you fools have never any occasion of laughing at us wits but when we quarrel. Therefore let us be friends, Oldfox.

Man. They are such wits as thou art, who make the name of a wit as scandalous as that of bully, and signify a loud-laughing, talking, incorrigible coxcomb, as bully, a roaring hardened coward.

Free. And would have his noise and laughter pass for wit, as t'other his huffing and blustering for courage.

Re-enter VERNISH.

Man. Gentlemen, with your leave, here is one I would speak with ; and I have nothing to say to you.

[Puts all out of the room except VERNISH.]

Ver. I told you 'twas in vain to think of getting money out of her. She says, if a shilling would do't, she would not save you from starving or hanging, or what you would think worse, begging or flattering ; and rails so at you.

Man. O, friend, never trust for that matter a woman's railing ; for she is no less a dissembler in her hatred than her love.

Ver. He's in the right on't : I know not what to trust to. *[Aside.]*

Man. But you did not take any notice of it to her, I hope ?

Ver. So !—Sure he is afraid I should have disproved him by an inquiry of her : all may be well yet. *[Aside.]*

Man. What hast thou in thy head that makes thee seem so unquiet ?

Ver. Only this base impudent woman's falseness ; I cannot put her out of my head.

Man. O, my dear friend, be not you too sensible of my wrongs ; for then I shall feel 'em too with more pain, and think 'em insufferable. But if thou wouldst ease a little my present trouble, prithee go borrow me somewhere else some money. I can trouble thee.

Ver. You trouble me, indeed, most sensibly, when you command me anything I cannot do. I have lately lost a great deal of money at play, more than I can yet pay ; so that not only my money, but my credit too is gone, and know not where to borrow ; but could rob a church for you. *[Aside.]*—Yet would rather end your wants by cutting your throat.

Man. Nay, then I doubly feel my poverty, since I'm incapable of supplying thee. *[Embraces him.]*

Ver. But, methinks, she—

Nov. *[looking in.]* Hey, tarpaulin, have you done ?

[Retires again.]

Ver. I understand not that point of kindness, I confess.

Man. No, thou dost not understand it, and I have not time to let you know all now ; for these fools, you see, will interrupt us ; but anon, at supper, we'll laugh at leisure together at Olivia's husband, who took a young fellow, that goes between his wife and me, for a woman.

Ver. Ah ?

Man. Senseless easy rascal ! 'twas no wonder she chose him for a husband ; but she thought him, I thank her, fitter than me for that office.

Ver. I could not be deceived.

[Aside.]

Man. What, you wonder the fellow could be such a blind coxcomb.

Ver. Yes, yes.

Nov. [*Looking in again.*] Nay, prithee, come to us, Manly. Gad, all the fine things one says in their company, are lost without thee.

Man. Away, fop ! I'm busy yet.—[*NOVEL retires.*] You see we cannot talk here at our ease ; besides, I must be gone immediately, in order to meeting with Olivia again to-night.

Ver. To-night ! it cannot be, sure——

Man. I had an appointment just now from her.

Ver. For what time ?

Man. At half an hour after seven precisely.

Ver. Don't you apprehend the husband ?

Man. He ! he a thing to be feared ! a husband ! the tameest of creatures !

Ver. Very fine !

[*Aside.*

Man. But, prithee, in the meantime, go try to get me some money. Though thou art too modest to borrow for thyself, thou canst do anything for me, I know. Go ; for I must be gone to Olivia. Go, and meet me here anon.—Freeman, where are you ?

[*Exit.*

Ver. Ay, I'll meet with you, I warrant ; but it shall be at Olivia's. Sure, it cannot be : she denies it so calmly, and with that honest modest assurance, it cannot be true—and he does not use to lie—but belying a woman when she won't be kind, is the only lie a brave man will least scruple. But then the woman in man's clothes, whom he calls a man—well, but I know her to be a woman ; but then again, his appointment from her, to meet with him to-night ! I am distracted more with doubt than jealousy. Well, I have no way to disabuse or revenge myself but by going home immediately, putting on a riding-suit, and pretending to my wife the same business which carried me out of town last, requires me again to go post to Oxford to-night. Then, if the appointment he boasts of be true, it's sure to hold, and I shall have an opportunity either of clearing her, or revenging myself on both. If this be true, he must needs discover by her my treachery to him ; which I'm sure he will revenge with my death, and which I must prevent with his, if it were only but for fear of his too just reproaches ; for I must confess, I never had till now any excuse but that of interest, for doing ill to him. [*Exit.*

Re-enter MANLY and FREEMAN.

Man. Come hither ; only, I say, be sure you mistake not the time. You know the house exactly where Olivia lodges—'tis just hard by.

Free. Yes, yes.

Man. Well then, bring 'em all, I say, thither, and all you know that may be then in the house ; for the more witnesses I have of her infamy, the greater will be my revenge ; and be sure you come straight up to her chamber without more ado. Here, take the watch ; you see 'tis above a quarter past seven ; be there in half an hour exactly.

Free. You need not doubt my diligence or dexterity ; I am an old scourer. Shan't we break her windows too ?

Man. No, no ; be punctual only.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE III.—*A Room in the same.*

Enter WIDOW BLACKACRE, and two KNIGHTS OF THE POST,
a WAITER following with wine.

Wid. Sweetheart, are you sure the door was shut close, that none of those roysterers saw us come ?

Wait. Yes, mistress ; and you shall have a privater room above, instantly. [Exit.

Wid. You are safe enough, gentlemen ; for I have been private in this house ere now, upon other occasions, when I was something younger. Come, gentlemen ; in short, I leave my business to your care and fidelity ; and so, here's to you.

1 Knight. We are ungrateful rogues if we should not be honest to you ; for we have had a great deal of your money.

Wid. And you have done me many a good job for't ; and so, here's to you again.

2 Knight. Why, we have been perjured but six times for you.

1 Knight. Forged but four deeds, with your husband's last deed of gift.

2 Knight. And but three wills.

1 Knight. And counterfeited hands and seals to some six bonds ; I think that's all, brother ?

Wid. Ay, that's all, gentlemen ; and so, here's to you again.

2 Knight. Nay, 'twould do one's heart good to be forsworn for you. You have a conscience in your ways, and pay us well.

1 Knight. You are in the right on't, brother ; one would die for her with all one's heart.

2 Knight. But there are rogues who make us forsworn for 'em ; and when we come to be paid, they'll be forsworn too, and not pay us our wages, which they promised with oaths sufficient.

1 Knight. Ay, a great lawyer that shall be nameless bilked me too.

Wid. That was hard, methinks, that a lawyer should use gentlemen witnesses no better.

2 Knight. A lawyer ! d'ye wonder a lawyer should dot ? I was bilked by a reverend divine, that preaches twice on Sundays, and prays half an hour still before dinner.

Wid. How ! a conscientious divine, and not pay people for damning themselves ! sure then, for all his talking, he does not believe. But, come, to our business. Pray be sure to imitate exactly the flourish at the end of his name. [Pulls out a deed or two.

1 Knight. O, he's the best in England at untangling a flourish, madam.

Wid. And let not the seal be a jot bigger. Observe well the dash too, at the end of this name.

2 Knight. I warrant you, madam.

Wid. Well, these and many other shifts poor widows are put to sometimes ; for everybody would be breaking into her jointure. They think marrying a widow an easy business, like leaping the hedge where another has gone over before. A widow is a mere gap, a gap with them.

Enter MAJOR OLDFOX, with two WAITERS. The KNIGHTS OF THE POST huddle up the writings.

What ! he here ! Go then, go my hearts, you have your instructions.

[Exeunt KNIGHTS OF THE POST.]

Old. Come, madam, to be plain with you, I'll be fobbed off no longer. *[Aside.]*—I'll bind her and gag her but she shall hear me. *[To the WAITERS.]*—Look you, friends, there's the money I promised you ; and now do you what you promised me : here my garters, and here's a gag. *[To the WIDOW.]*—You shall be acquainted with my parts, lady, you shall.

Wid. Help ! help ! What, will you ravish me ?

[The WAITERS tie her to the chair, gag her, and exeunt.]

Old. Yes, lady, I will ravish you ; but it shall be through the ear, lady, the ear only, with my well-penned acrostics.

Enter FREEMAN, JERRY BLACKACRE, three BAILIFFS, a CONSTABLE, and his ASSISTANTS, with the two KNIGHTS OF THE POST.

What ! shall I never read my things undisturbed again ?

Jer. O la ! my mother bound hand and foot, and gaping as if she rose before her time to-day !

Free. What means this, Oldfox ? But I'll release you from him ; you shall be no man's prisoner but mine. Bailiffs, execute your writ. *[Unties her.]*

Old. Nay, then, I'll be gone, for fear of being bail, and paying her debts without being her husband. *[Exit.]*

1 Bail. We arrest you in the king's name, at the suit of Mr. Freeman, guardian to Jeremiah Blackacre, Esquire, in an action of ten thousand pounds.

Wid. How, how, in a choke-bail action ! What, and the pen-and-ink gentlemen taken too !—Have you confessed, you rogues ?

1 Knight. We needed not to confess ; for the bailiffs have dogged us hither to the very door, and overheard all that you and we said.

Wid. Undone, undone then ! no man was ever too hard for me till now. O Jerry, child, wilt thou vex again the mother that bore thee ?

Jer. Ay, for bearing me before wedlock, as you say. But I'll teach you to call a Blackacre bastard, though you were never so much my mother.

Wid. [*aside.*] Well, I'm undone! not one trick left? no law-mesh imaginable? [*To FREEMAN.*]—Cruel sir, a word with you, I pray.

Free. In vain, madam; for you have no other way to release yourself, but by the bonds of matrimony.

Wid. How, sir, how! that were but to sue out a habeas corpus, for a removal from one prison to another.—Matrimony!

Free. Well, bailiffs, away with her.

Wid. O stay, sir! can you be so cruel as to bring me under Covert-Baron again, and put it out of my power to sue in my own name. Matrimony to a woman is worse than excommunication, in depriving her of the benefit of the law; and I would rather be deprived of life. But, hark you, sir, I am contented you should have the privileges of a husband, without the dominion; that is, *durante beneplacito*. In consideration of which, I will out of my jointure secure you an annuity of three hundred pounds a year, and pay your debts; and that's all you younger brothers desire to marry a widow for, I'm sure.

Free. Well, widow, if—

Fer. What! I hope, bully-guardian, you are not making agreements without me?

Free. No, no. First, widow, you must say no more than he is a bastard; have a care of that. And, then, he must have a settled exhibition of forty pounds a year, and a nag of assizes, kept by you, but not upon the common; and have free ingress, egress, and regress.

Wid. Well, I can grant all that too.

Fer. Ay, ay, fair words butter no cabbage; but, guardian, make her sign, sign and seal; for otherwise, if you knew her as well as I, you would not trust her word for a farthing.

Free. I warrant thee, squire.—Well, widow, since thou art so generous, I will be generous too; and if you'll secure me four hundred pounds a year, but during your life, and pay my debts, not above a thousand pounds, I'll bate you the husband.

Wid. Have a care, sir, a settlement without a consideration is void in law; you must do something for't.

Free. Prithee, then let the settlement on me be called alimony; and the consideration, our separation. Come, my lawyer, with writings ready drawn, is within, and in haste. Come. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—OLIVIA'S Lodging.

Enter OLIVIA with a candle in her hand.

Oliv. So, I am now prepared once more for my timorous young lover's reception. My husband is gone; and go thou out too, thou next interrupter of love.—[*Puts out the candle.*] Kind darkness, that frees us lovers from scandal and bashfulness, from the censure of our gallants and the world!—So, are you there?

Enter FIDELIA, followed softly by MANLY.

Come, my dear punctual lover, there is not such another in the world ; thou hast beauty and youth to please a wife ; address and wit to amuse and fool a husband ; nay, thou hast all things to be wished in a lover, but your fits. I hope, my dear, you won't have one to-night ; and that you may not, I'll lock the door, though there be no need of it, but to lock out your fits ; for my husband is just gone out of town again. Come, where are you ?

[Goes to the door and locks it.]

Man. Well, thou hast impudence enough to give me fits too, and make revenge itself impotent ; hinder me from making thee yet more infamous, if it can be.

[Aside.]

Oliv. Come, come, my soul, come.

Fid. Presently, my dear, we have time enough, sure.

Oliv. How, time enough ! True lovers can no more think they ever have time enough, than love enough. Come.

Fid. But won't you let me give you and myself the satisfaction of telling you how I abused your husband last night ?

Oliv. Not when you can give me, and yourself too, the satisfaction of abusing him again to-night. Come.

Fid. Let me but tell you how your husband—

Oliv. O name not his, or Manly's more loathsome name, if you love me ! I forbid 'em last night ; and you know I mentioned my husband but once, and he came. No talking, pray, 'twas ominous to us.—*[A noise at the door.]* You make me fancy a noise at the door already, but I'm resolved not to be interrupted. Where are you ? Come, for rather than lose my dear expectation now, though my husband were at the door, and the bloody ruffian Manly here in the room, with all his awful insolence, I would give myself to this dear hand.—*[The noise at the door increases.]* But what's this noise at the door ? So, I told you what talking would come to. Ha !—O heavens, my husband's voice !—

[Listens at the door.]

Man. *[aside.]* Freeman is come too soon.

Oliv. Oh, 'tis he !—then here's the happiest minute lost that ever bashful boy or trifling woman fooled away ! I'm undone ! my husband's reconciliation too was false, as my joy all delusion. But come this way, here's a back door.—*[Exit, and returns.]*—The officious jade has locked us in, instead of locking others out ; but let us then escape your way, by the balcony ; and whilst you pull down the curtains, I'll fetch from my closet what next will best secure our escape. I have left my key in the door, and 'twill not suddenly be broken open.

[Exit.]

[A noise as it were people forcing the door.]

Man. Stir not yet, fearing nothing.

Fid. Nothing but your life, sir.

Man. We shall know this happy man she calls husband.

Re-enter OLIVIA.

Oliv. Oh, where are you? What, idle with fear? Come, I'll tie the curtains, if you will hold. Here, take this cabinet and purse, for it is thine, if we escape;—[*MANLY takes them from her*]
—therefore, let us make haste. [*Exit.*]

Man. 'Tis mine indeed now again, and it shall never escape more from me, to you at least.

[*The door broke open, enter VERNISH with a dark lantern and a sword, running at MANLY, who draws, puts by the thrust, and defends himself, whilst FIDELIA runs at VERNISH behind.*]

Ver. So, there I'm right, sure—— [*In a low voice.*]

Man. [*softly.*] Sword and dark lantern, villain, are some odds; but——

Ver. Odds! I'm sure I find more odds than I expected. What, has my insatiable two seconds at once? But—— [*In a low voice.*]

[*Whilst they fight, OLIVIA re-enters, tying two curtains together.*]

Oliv. Where are you now? What, is he entered then, and are they fighting? O do not kill one that can make no defence!—[*MANLY throws VERNISH down and disarms him.*] How! but I think he has the better on't. Here's his scarf—'tis he. So, keep him down still. I hope thou hast no hurt, my dearest?

[*Embracing MANLY.*]

Enter FREEMAN, LORD PLAUSIBLE, NOVEL, JERRY BLACKACRE and the WIDOW BLACKACRE, lighted by the two SAILORS with torches.

Ha!—what!—Manly! and have I been thus concerned for him! embracing him! and has he his jewels again too! What means this. O, 'tis too sure, as well as my shame! which I'll go hide for ever.

[*Offers to go out. MANLY stops her.*]

Man. No, my dearest; after so much kindness as has passed between us, I cannot part with you yet.—Freeman, let nobody stir out of the room; for notwithstanding your lights, we are yet in the dark till this gentleman please to turn his face.—[*Pulls VERNISH by the sleeve.*] How, Vernish! art thou the happy man then? thou! thou! Speak, I say; but thy guilty silence tells me all.—Well, I shall not upbraid thee; for my wonder is striking me as dumb as thy shame has made thee. But what! my little volunteer hurt, and fainting!

Fid. My wound, sir, is but a slight one in my arm; 'tis only my fear of your danger, sir, not yet well over.

Man. But what's here? more strange things!—[*Observing FIDELIA'S hair untied behind, and without a peruke, which she lost in the scuffle.*] What means this long woman's hair, and face! now all of it appears too beautiful for a man; which I still thought

womanish indeed ! What, you have not deceived me too, my little volunteer ?

Oliv. Me she has, I'm sure.

[*Aside.*

Man. Speak !

Enter ELIZA and LETTICE.

Eliza. What, cousin, I am brought hither by your woman, I suppose, to be a witness of the second vindication of your honour ?

Oliv. Insulting is not generous. You might spare me—I have you.

Eliza. Have a care, cousin, you'll confess anon too much ; and I would not have your secrets.

Man. Come, your blushes answer me sufficiently, and you have been my volunteer in love. [To FIDELIA.]

Fid. I must confess I needed no compulsion to follow you all the world over ; which I attempted in this habit, partly out of shame to own my love to you, and fear of a greater shame, your refusal of it ; for I knew of your engagement to this lady, and the constancy of your nature ; which nothing could have altered but herself.

Man. Dear madam, I desired you to bring me out of confusion, and you have given me more. I know not what to speak to you, or how to look upon you ; the sense of my rough, hard, and ill usage of you (though chiefly your own fault), gives me more pain now 'tis over, than you had when you suffered it ; and if my heart, the refusal of such a woman—[*pointing to OLIVIA*—]were not a sacrifice to profane your love, and a greater wrong to you than ever yet I did you, I would beg of you to receive it, though you used it as she had done ; for though it deserved not from her the treatment she gave it, it does from you.

Fid. Then it has had punishment sufficient from her already, and needs no more from me ; and, I must confess, I would not be the only cause of making you break your last night's oath to me, of never parting with me, if you do not forget or repent it.

Man. Then take for ever my heart, and this with it—(*gives her the cabinet*) ; for 'twas given to you before, and my heart was before your due ; I only beg leave to dispose of these few.—Here, madam.

[*Takes some of the jewels, and offers them to OLIVIA ; she strikes them down ; PLAUSIBLE and NOVEL take them up.*

Plaus. These pendants appertain to your most faithful humble servant.

Nov. And this locket is mine ; my earnest for love, which she never paid ; therefore my own again.

Wid. By what law, sir, pray ?—Cousin Olivia, a word. What, do they make a seizure on your goods and chattels, *vi et armis* ? Make your demand, I say, and bring your trover, bring your trover. I'll follow the law for you.

Oliv. And I my revenge.

[*Exit.*

Man. [To VERNISH.] But 'tis, my friend, in your consideration most, that I would have returned part of your wife's portion ; for

'twere hard to take all from thee, since thou has paid so dear for't in being such a rascal. Yet thy wife is a fortune without a portion ; and thou art a man of that extraordinary merit in villany, the world and fortune can never desert thee, though I do ; therefore be not melancholy. Fare you well, sir.—[*Exit VERNISH doggedly.*] Now, madam, I beg your pardon [*turning to FIDELIA*] for lessening the present I made you ; but my heart can never be lessened. This, I confess, was too small for you before ; for you deserve the Indian world ; and I would now go thither, out of covetousness for your sake only.

Fid. Your heart, sir, is a present of that value, I can never make any return to't—[*pulling MANLY from the company*]. But I can give you back such a present as this, which I got by the loss of my father, a gentleman of the north, of no mean extraction, whose only child I was, therefore left me in the present possession of two thousand pounds a year ; which I left, with multitudes of pretenders, to follow you, sir ; having in several public places seen you, and observed your actions thoroughly, with admiration, when you were too much in love to take notice of mine, which yet was but too visible. The name of my family is Grey, my other Fidelity. The rest of my story shall know when I have fewer auditors.

Man. Nay, now, madam, you have taken from me all power of making you any compliment on my part ; for I was going to tell you, that for your sake only I would quit the unknown pleasure of a retirement ; and rather stay in this ill world of ours still, though odious to me, than give you more frights again at sea, and make again too great a venture there, in you alone. But if I should tell you now all this, and that your virtue (since greater than I thought any was in the world) had now reconciled me to't, my friend here would say, 'tis your estate that has made me friends with the world.

Free. I must confess I should ; for I think most of our quarrels to the world are only because we cannot enjoy her as we would do.

Man. Nay, if thou art a plain dealer too, give me thy hand ; for now I'll say, I am thy friend indeed ; and for your two sakes, though I have been so lately deceived in friends of both sexes—

I will believe there are now in the world
Good-natured friends, who are not blood-suckers,
And handsome women worthy to be friends ;
Yet, for my sake, let no one e'er confide
In tears, or oaths, in love, or friend untried.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]



THE MOCK DOCTOR.

(MOLIÈRE'S "LE MEDECIN MALGRÉ LUI.")

By HENRY FIELDING.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR JASPER.
LEANDER.
GREGORY.
ROBERT.
JAMES.
HARRY.

DAVY.
HELLEBOR.
DORCAS.
CHARLOTTE.
MAID.

SCENE.—PARTLY IN A COUNTRY TOWN AND PARTLY IN A WOOD.

SCENE I.—A Wood.

DORCAS, GREGORY.

Greg. I tell you no, I won't comply, and it is my business to talk and to command.

Dorc. And I tell you you shall conform to my will, and that I was not married to you to suffer your ill-humours.

Greg. O the intolerable fatigue of matrimony! Aristotle never said a better thing in his life than when he told us "That a wife is worse than a devil."

Dorc. Hear the learned gentleman with his Aristotle!

Greg. And a learned man I am too; find me out a maker of fagots that's able, like myself, to reason upon things, or that can boast such an education as mine.

Dorc. An education!

Greg. Ay, hussy, a regular education; first at the charity-school, where I learnt to read; then I waited on a gentleman at Oxford, where I learnt very near as much as my master; from whence I attended a travelling physician six years, under the facetious denomination of a Merry-Andrew, where I learnt physic.

Dorc. O that thou hadst followed him still! Cursed be the hour wherein I answered the parson. "I will!"



Greg. And cursed be the parson that asked me the question !

Dorc. You have reason to complain of him, indeed, who ought to be on your knees every moment returning thanks to Heaven for that great blessing it sent you when it sent you myself. I hope you have not the assurance to think you deserve such a wife as me ?

Greg. No, really, I don't think I do.

AIR I.—*Bessy Bell.*

Dorc. When a lady like me condescends to agree
To let such a jackanapes taste her,
With what zeal and care should he worship the fair,
Who gives him—what's meat for his master !
His actions should still
Attend on her will.
Hear, sirrah, and take it for warning ;
To her he should be
Each night on his knee,
And so he should be on each morning.

Greg. Come, come, madam ; it was a lucky day for you when you found me out.

Dorc. Lucky, indeed ! a fellow who eats everything I have.

Greg. That happens to be a mistake, for I drink some part on't.

Dorc. That has not even left me a bed to lie on.

Greg. You'll rise the earlier.

Dorc. And who from morning till night is eternally in an ale-house.

Greg. It's genteel—the squire does the same.

Dorc. Pray, sir, what are you willing I shall do with my family.

Greg. Whatever you please.

Dorc. My four little children that are continually crying for bread.

Greg. Give 'em a rod ! best cure in the world for crying children.

Dorc. And do you imagine, sot——

Greg. Hark ye, my dear ; you know my temper is not over and above passive, and that my arm is extremely active.

Dorc. I laugh at your threats—poor, beggarly, insolent fellow !

Greg. Soft object of my wishing eyes, I shall play with your pretty ears.

Dorc. Touch me if you dare, you insolent, impudent, dirty, lazy, rascally——

Greg. Oh, ho, ho ! you will have it then, I find. [Beats her.

Dorc. O, murder ! murder !

SCENE II.

GREGORY, DORCAS, SQUIRE ROBERT.

Rob. What's the matter here ? Fie upon you, fie upon you, neighbour, to beat your wife in this scandalous manner !

Dorc. Well, sir, and I have a mind to be beat ; and what then ?

Rob. O dear madam ! I give my consent with all my heart and soul.

Dorc. What's that to you, sauce-box ? Is it any business of yours ?

Rob. No, certainly, madam.

Dorc. Here's an impertinent fellow for you, won't suffer a husband to beat his own wife !

AIR II.—*Winchester Wedding.*

Go thrash your own rib, sir, at home,
Nor thus interfere with our strife ;
May misery still be his doom
Who strives to part husband and wife !
Suppose I've a mind he should drub,
Whose bones are they, sir, he's to lick ?
At whose expense is it, you scrub ?
You are not to find him a stick.

Rob. Neighbour, I ask your pardon heartily ; here, take and thrash your wife ; beat her as you ought to do.

Greg. No, sir, I won't beat her.

Rob. O ! sir, that's another thing.

Greg. I'll beat her when I please ; and will not beat her when I do not please. She is my wife, and not yours.

Rob. Certainly.

Dorc. Give me the stick, dear husband.

Rob. Well, if ever I attempt to part husband and wife again, may I be beaten myself !

SCENE III.

GREGORY, DORCAS.

Greg. Come, my dear, let us be friends.

Dorc. What, after beating me so ?

Greg. 'Twas but in jest.

Dorc. I desire you will crack your jests on your own bones, not on mine.

Greg. Pshaw ! you know you and I are one ; and I beat one-half of myself when I beat you.

Dorc. Yes ; but, for the future, I desire you will beat the other half of yourself.

Greg. Come, my pretty dear, I ask pardon ; I am sorry for't.

Dorc. For once I pardon you ; but you shall pay for't.

Greg. Pshaw ! pshaw ! child ; these are only little affairs, necessary in friendship : four or five good blows with a cudgel between your very fond couples only tend to heighten the affections. I'll now to the wood, and I promise thee to make a hundred fagots before I come home again.

Dorc. If I am not revenged on those blows of yours! Oh, that I could but think of some method to be revenged on him! Hang the rogue, he is quite insensible. Oh, that I could find out some invention to get him well drubbed!

SCENE IV.

HARRY, JAMES, DORCAS.

Har. Were ever two fools sent on such a message as we are in quest of a dumb doctor?

James. Blame your own cursed memory that made you forget his name. For my part, I'll travel through the world rather than return without him; that were as much as a limb or two were worth.

Har. Was ever such a cursed misfortune? to lose the letter! I should not even know his name if I were to hear it.

Dorc. Can I find no invention to be revenged?—Hey-day! who are these?

James. Harkye, mistress; do you know where—where—where Doctor What-d'ye-call-him lives?

Dorc. Doctor who?

James. Doctor—doctor—What's-his-name?

Dorc. Hey! what, has the fellow a mind to banter me?

Har. Is there no physician hereabouts famous for curing dumbness?

Dorc. I fancy you have no need of such a physician, Mr. Impertinence.

Har. Don't mistake us, good woman—we don't mean to banter you. We are sent by our master, whose daughter has lost her speech, for a certain physician who lives hereabouts. We have lost our direction, and 'tis as much as our lives are worth to return without him.

Dorc. There is one Doctor Lazy lives just by; but he has left off practising. You would not get him a mile to save the lives of a thousand patients.

James. Direct us but to him. We'll bring him with us one way or other, I warrant you.

Har. Ay, ay, we'll have him with us, though we carry him on our backs.

Dorc. Ha! Heaven has inspired me with one of the most admirable inventions to be revenged on my hangdog! [*Aside.*]—I assure you, if you can get him with you, he'll do your young lady's business for her; he's reckoned one of the best physicians in the world, especially for dumbness.

Har. Pray tell us where he lives.

Dorc. You'll never be able to get him out of his own house; but, if you watch hereabouts, you'll certainly meet with him, for he very often amuses himself with cutting wood.

Har. A physician cut wood !

James. I suppose he amuses himself in searching after herbs, you mean.

Dorc. No ; he's one of the most extraordinary men in the world ; he goes dressed like a common clown ; for there is nothing he so much dreads as to be known for a physician.

James. All your great men have some strange oddities about them.

Dorc. Why, he will suffer himself to be beat before he will own himself a physician ; and I'll give you my word you'll never make him own himself one unless you both of you take a good cudgel and thrash him into it ; 'tis what we are all forced to do when we have any need of him.

James. What a ridiculous whim is here !

Dorc. Very true ; and in so great a man !

James. And is he so very skilful a man ?

Dorc. Skilful ! why he does miracles. About half a year ago a woman was given over by all her physicians—nay, she had been dead for some time—when this great man came to her. As soon as he saw her he poured a little drop of something down her throat. He had no sooner done it than she got out of her bed, and walked about the room as if there had been nothing the matter with her.

Both. Oh, prodigious !

Dorc. 'Tis not above three weeks ago that a child of twelve years old fell from the top of a house to the bottom, and broke its skull, its arms, and legs. Our physician was no sooner drubbed into making him a visit, than, having rubbed the child all over with a certain ointment, it got upon its legs, and ran away toplay.

Both. Oh, most wonderful !

Har. Hey ! Gad, James, we'll drub him out of a pot of this ointment.

James. But can he cure dumbness ?

Dorc. Dumbness ? why the curate of our parish's wife was born dumb ; and the doctor, with a sort of wash, washed her tongue till he set it a going, so that in less than a month's time she out-talked her husband.

Har. This must be the very man we were sent after.

Dorc. Yonder is the very man I speak of.

James. What, that he, yonder ?

Dorc. The very same. He has spied us, and taken up his bill.

James. Come, Harry, don't let us lose one moment. Mistress, your servant ; we give you ten thousand thanks for this favour.

Dorc. Be sure and make good use of your sticks.

James. He shan't want that.

SCENE V.—*Another part of the Wood.*

JAMES, HARRY GREGORY.

Greg. Plague on't ! 'tis most confounded hot weather. Hey ! who have we here ?

James. Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Greg. Sir, your servant.

James. We are mighty happy in finding you here—

Greg. Ay, like enough.

James. 'Tis in your power, sir, to do us a very great favour. We come, sir, to implore your assistance in a certain affair.

Greg. If it be in my power to give you any assistance, masters, I'm very ready to do it.

James. Sir, you are extremely obliging. But, dear sir, let me beg you'd be covered : the sun will hurt your complexion.

Har. For Heaven's sake, sir, be covered.

Greg. These should be footmen by their dress, but should be courtiers by their ceremony. *[Aside.*

James. You must not think it strange, sir, that we come thus to seek after you : men of your capacity will be sought after by the whole world.

Greg. Truly, gentlemen, though I say it that should not say it, I have a pretty good hand at a fagot.

James. O dear, sir !

Greg. You may, perhaps, buy fagots cheaper elsewhere ; but, if you find such in all this country, you shall have mine for nothing. To make but one word then with you, you shall have mine for ten shillings a hundred.

James. Don't talk in that matter, I desire you.

Greg. I could not sell 'em a penny cheaper if 'twas to my father.

James. Dear, sir, we know you very well—don't jest with us in this manner.

Greg. Faith, master, I am so much in earnest, that I can't bate one farthing.

James. O pray, sir, leave this idle discourse.—Can a person like you amuse himself in this manner ? Can a learned and famous physician like you try to disguise himself to the world, and bury such fine talents in the woods ?

Greg. The fellow's a fool.

James. Let me entreat you, sir, not to dissemble with us.

Har. It is in vain, sir ; we know what you are.

Greg. Know what you are ?—what do you know of me ?

James. Why, we know you, sir, to be a very great physician.

Greg. Physician in your teeth !—I a physician !

James. The fit is on him. Sir, let me beseech you to conceal yourself no longer, and oblige us to—you know what.

Greg. Plague take me if I know what, sir! but I know this, that I'm no physician.

James. We must proceed to the usual remedy, I find. And so you are no physician?

Greg. No.

James. You are no physician?

Greg. No, I tell you.

James. Well, if we must, we must.

[*Beat him.*]

Greg. Oh! oh! gentlemen! gentlemen! what are you doing? I am—I am—whatever you please to have me.

James. Why will you oblige us, sir, to this violence?

Har. Why will you force us to this troublesome remedy?

James. I assure you, sir, it gives me a great deal of pain.

Greg. I assure you, sir, and so it does me. But pray, gentlemen, what is the reason that you have a mind to make a physician of me?

James. What! do you deny your being a physician again?

Greg. And plague take me if I am.

Harry. You are no physician?

Greg. May I be hanged if I am!—[*They beat him.*—] Oh! oh!—dear gentlemen; oh! for Heaven's sake, I am a physician, and an apothecary too, if you'll have me; I had rather be anything than be knocked 'o the head.

James. Dear sir, I am rejoiced to see you come to your senses; I ask pardon ten thousand times for what you have forced us to.

Greg. Perhaps I am deceived myself, and am a physician without knowing it. But, dear gentlemen, are you certain I'm a physician?

James. Yes, the greatest physician in the world.

Greg. Indeed!

Har. A physician that has cured all sorts of distempers.

Greg. The deuce I have!

James. That has made a woman walk about the room after she was dead six hours.

Har. That set a child upon its legs immediately after it had broken 'em.

James. That made the curate's wife, who was dumb, talk faster than her husband.

Har. Look ye, sir, you shall have content; my master will give you whatever you will demand.

Greg. Shall I have whatever I will demand?

James. You may depend upon it.

Greg. I am physician without doubt: I had forgot it, but I begin to recollect myself. Well, and what is the distemper I am to cure?

James. My young mistress, sir, has lost her tongue.

Greg. I haven't found it! But come, gentlemen, if I must go with you, I must have a physician's habit, for a physician can no more prescribe without a full wig than without a fee. [Exit.

SCENE VI.—SIR JASPER'S *house*.

SIR JASPER, JAMES.

Jasp. Where is he?—where is he?*James.* Only recruiting himself after his journey. You need not be impatient, sir; for, were my young lady dead, he'd bring her to life again. He makes no more of bringing a patient to life than other physicians do of killing him.*Jasp.* 'Tis strange so great a man should have those unaccountable odd humours you mentioned.*James.* 'Tis but a good blow or two, and he comes immediately to himself. Here he is.

SCENE VII.

SIR JASPER, JAMES, GREGORY, HARRY.

Har. Sir, this is the doctor.*Jasp.* Dear sir, you're the welcomest man in the world.*Greg.* Hippocrates says we should both be cover'd.*Jasp.* Ha! does Hippocrates say so?—In what chapter, pray?*Greg.* In his chapter of hats.*Jasp.* Since Hippocrates says so, I shall obey him.*Greg.* Doctor, after having exceedingly travell'd in the highway of letters——*Jasp.* Doctor, pray whom do you speak to?*Greg.* To you, doctor.*Jasp.* Ha, ha!—I am a knight, thank the King's grace for it; but no doctor.*Greg.* What, you're no doctor?*Jasp.* No, upon my word.*Greg.* You're no doctor?*Jasp.* Doctor! no.*Greg.* There—'tis done.[*Beats him.*]*Jasp.* Done, plague on you! what's done?*Greg.* Why, now you're made a doctor of physic—I am sure it's all the degrees I ever took.*Jasp.* What ruffian of a fellow have you brought here?*James.* I told you, sir, the doctor had strange whims with him.*Jasp.* Whims, quotha!—Egad, I shall bind his physicianship over to his good behaviour, if he has any more of these whims.*Greg.* Sir, I ask pardon for the liberty I have taken.*Jasp.* Oh! it's very well, it's very well for once.*Greg.* I am sorry for those blows——*Jasp.* Nothing at all, nothing at all, sir.*Greg.* Which I was obliged to have the honour of laying on so thick upon you.

Jasp. Let us talk no more of 'em, sir. My daughter, doctor, has fallen into a very strange distemper.

Greg. Sir, I am overjoyed to hear it ; and I wish, with all my heart, you and your whole family had the same occasion for me as your daughter, to show the great desire I have to serve you.

Jasp. Sir, I am obliged to you.

Greg. I assure you, sir, I speak from the very bottom of my soul.

Jasp. I do believe you, sir, from the very bottom of mine.

Greg. What is your daughter's name ?

Jasp. My daughter's name is Charlot.

Greg. Are you sure she was christened Charlot ?

Jasp. No, sir, she was christened Charlotta.

Greg. Hum ! I had rather she should have been christened Charlotte. Charlotte is a very good name for a patient ; and, let me tell you, the name is often of as much service to the patient as the physician is.

SCENE VIII.

SIR JASPER, GREGORY, CHARLOT, MAID.

Jasp. Sir, my daughter's here.

Greg. Is that my patient ? Upon my word she carries no distemper in her countenance—and I fancy a healthy young fellow would sit very well beside her.

Jasp. You make her smile, doctor.

Greg. So much the better ; 'tis a very good sign where we can bring a patient to smile ; it is a sign that the distemper begins to clarify, as we say.—Well, child, what's the matter with you ? What's your distemper ?

Charl. Han, hi, hon, han.

Greg. What do you say ?

Charl. Han, hi, han, hon.

Greg. What, what, what ?

Charl. Han, hi, hon.

Greg. Han ! hon ! honin ha !—I don't understand a word she says. Han ! hi ! hon ! What sort of a language is this ?

Jasp. Why, that's her distemper, sir. She's become dumb, and no one can assign the cause—and this distemper, sir, has kept back her marriage.

Greg. Kept back her marriage ! Why so ?

Jasp. Because her lover refuses to have her till she's cured.

Greg. O Lud ! was ever such a fool, that would not have his wife dumb !—Would to heaven my wife was dumb ! I'd be far from desiring to cure her.—Does this distemper, this Han, hi, hon, oppress her very much ?

Jasp. Yes, sir.

Greg. So much the better. Has she any great pains ?

Jasp. Very great.

Greg. That's just as I would have it. Give me your hand, child. Hum—ha—a very dumb pulse indeed.

Jasp. You have guessed her distemper.

Greg. Ay, sir, we great physicians know a distemper immediately ; I know some of the college would call this the Boree, or the Coupee, or the Sinkee, or twenty other distempers ; but I give you my word, sir, your daughter is nothing more than dumb. So I'd have you be very easy ; for there is nothing else the matter with her.—If she were not dumb, she would be as well as I am

Jasp. But I should be glad to know, doctor, from whence her dumbness proceeds ?

Greg. Nothing so easily accounted for. Her dumbness proceeds from her having lost her speech.

Jasp. But whence, if you please, proceeds her having lost her speech ?

Greg. All our best authors will tell you it is the impediment of the action of the tongue.

Jasp. But, if you please, dear sir, your sentiments upon that impediment.

Greg. Aristotle has, upon that subject, said very fine things—very fine things.

Jasp. I believe it, doctor.

Greg. Ah ! he was a great man, he was indeed, a very great man—a man who upon that subject was a man that—But to return to our reasoning : I hold that this impediment of the action of the tongue is caused by certain humours which our great physicians call—humours—Ah ! you understand Latin—

Jasp. Not in the least.

Greg. What, not understand Latin ?

Jasp. No, indeed, doctor.

Greg. *Cabricius arci thuram cathalimus, singulariter nom. Hæc musa hic, hæc, hoc, genitivo hujus, hunc, hanc musæ. Bonus, bona, bonum. Estne oratio Latinus ? Etiam. Quia substantivo et adjectivum concordat in generi numerum et casus sic dicunt, aiunt, prædicant, clamitant, et similibus.*

Jasp. Ah ! Why did I neglect my studies ?

Har. What a prodigious man is this !

Greg. Besides, sir, certain spirits passing from the left side, which is the seat of the liver, to the right, which is the seat of the heart, we find the lungs, which we call in Latin, Whiskerus, having communication with the brain, which we name in Greek, Jackbootos, by means of a hollow vein, which we call in Hebrew, Perriwiggus, meet in the road with the said spirits which fill the ventricles of the Omotaplasmus ; and because the said humours have—you comprehend me well, sir ? And because the said humours have a certain malignity.—Listen seriously, I beg you.

Jasp. I do.

Greg. Have a certain malignity that is caused—Be attentive, if you please.

Fasp. I am.

Greg. That is caused, I say, by the acrimony of the humours engendered in the concavity of the diaphragm; thence it arises that these vapours, *Propria quæ maribus tribuuntur*, *mascula dicas*, *Ut sunt divorum*, Mars, Bacchus, Apollo, *virorum*.—This, sir, is the cause of your daughter's being dumb.

Har. O that I had but his tongue!

Fasp. It is impossible to reason better, no doubt. But, dear sir, there is one thing—I always thought till now that the heart was on the left side, and the liver on the right.

Greg. Ay, sir, so they were formerly; but we have changed all that. The college at present, sir, proceeds upon an entire new method.

Fasp. I ask your pardon, sir.

Greg. O, sir! there's no harm; you're not obliged to know so much as we do.

Fasp. Very true. But, doctor, what would you have done with my daughter?

Greg. What would I have done with her? Why, my advice is, that you immediately put her into a bed warmed with a brass warming-pan; cause her to drink one quart of spring-water, mixed with one pint of brandy, six Seville oranges, and three ounces of the best double-refined sugar.

Fasp. Why, this is punch, doctor.

Greg. Punch, sir? ay, sir—And what's better than punch to make people talk?—Never tell me of your juleps, your gruels, your—your—this and that, and t'other, which are only arts to keep a patient in hand a long time.—I love to do business all at once.

Fasp. Doctor, I ask pardon; you shall be obeyed.

[*Gives money.*]

Greg. I'll return in the evening, and see what effect it has had on her. But hold; there's another young lady here that I must apply some little remedies to.

Maid. Who, me? I was never better in my life, I thank you, sir.

Greg. So much the worse, madam; so much the worse.—'Tis very dangerous to be very well; for when one is very well, one has nothing else to do but to take physic and bleed away.

Fasp. Oh, strange! What, bleed when one has no distemper?

Greg. It may be strange, perhaps, but 'tis very wholesome. Besides, madam, it is not your case, at present, to be very well; at least, you cannot possibly be well above three days longer; and it is always best to cure a distemper before you have it; or, as we say in Greek, *Distemprium bestum est curare ante habestum*.—What I shall prescribe you at present is, to take every six hours one of these boluses.

Maid. Ha, ha, ha! Why, doctor, these look exactly like lumps of loaf-sugar.

Greg. Take one of these boluses, I say, every six hours, washing it down with six spoonfuls of the best Hollands Geneva.

Jasp. Sure you are in jest, doctor!—This wench does not show any symptoms of distemper.

Greg. Sir Jasper, let me tell you, it were not amiss if you yourself took a little lenitive physic : I shall prepare something for you.

Jasp. Ha, ha, ha ! No, no, doctor, I have escaped both doctors and distempers hitherto ; and I am resolved the distemper shall pay me the first visit.

Greg. Say you so, sir? Why then, if I can get no more patients here, I must even seek 'em elsewhere ; and so humbly beggo te domine domitii veniam goundi foras.

Jasp. Well, this is a physician of vast capacity, but of exceeding odd humours.

SCENE IX.—*The Street.*

LEANDER, *solus.*

Ah, Charlot ! thou hast no reason to apprehend my ignorance of what thou endurest, since I can so easily guess thy torment by my own. Oh, how much more justifiable are my fears, when you have not only the command of a parent, but the temptation of fortune to allure you !

AIR III.

O cursed power of gold,
For which all honour's sold,
And honesty's no more !
For thee we often find
The great in leagues combined
To trick and rob the poor.

By thee the fool and knave
Transcend the wise and brave,
So absolute they reign :
Without some help of thine,
The greatest beauties shine,
And lovers plead in vain.

SCENE X.

LEANDER, GREGORY.

Greg. Upon my word, this is a good beginning ; and since——

Lean. I have waited for you, doctor, a long time. I'm come to beg your assistance.

Greg. Ah, you have need of assistance, indeed ! What a pulse is here ! What do you out o' your bed ? *[Feels his pulse.]*

Lean. Ha, ha, ha ! Doctor, you're mistaken ! I am not sick, I assure you.

Greg. How, sir ! not sick ! Do you think I don't know when a man is sick better than he does himself ?

Lean. Well, if I have any distemper, it is the love of that young lady, your patient, from whom you just now come; and to whom if you can convey me, I swear, dear doctor, I shall be effectually cured.

Greg. Do you take me for a go-between, sir? a physician for a go-between?

Lean. Dear sir, make no noise.

Greg. Sir, I will make a noise: you are an impertinent fellow.

Lean. Softly, good sir!

Greg. I shall show you, sir, that I'm not such a sort of person, and that you are an insolent, saucy—[*LEANDER gives a purse*]—I'm not speaking to you, sir; but there are certain impertinent fellows in the world that take people for what they are not—which always puts me, sir, into such a passion, that—

Lean. I ask pardon, sir, for the liberty I have taken.

Greg. O, dear sir! no offence in the least. Pray, sir, how am I to serve you?

Lean. This distemper, sir, which you are sent for to cure, is feigned. The physicians have reasoned upon it, according to custom, and have derived from the brain, from the bowels, from the liver, lungs, lights, and every part of the body; but the true cause of it is love, and is an invention of Charlot's to deliver her from a match which she dislikes.

Greg. Hum!—Suppose you were to disguise yourself as an apothecary?

Lean. I'm not very well known to her father; therefore believe I may pass upon him securely.

Greg. Go, then, disguise yourself immediately; I'll wait for you here.—Ha! methinks I see a patient. [*Exit LEANDER.*]

SCENE XI.

GREGORY, JAMES, DAVY.

Greg. Gad, matters go swimmingly. I'll even continue a physician as long as I live.

James [*speaking to DAVY.*] Fear not; if he relapse into his humours, I'll quickly thrash him into the physician again. Doctor, I have brought you a patient.

Davy. My poor wife, doctor, has kept her bed these six months. [*GREGORY holds out his hand.*]—If your worship would find out some means to cure her—

Greg. What's the matter with her?

Davy. Why, she has had several physicians: one says 'tis the dropsy; another 'tis the what-d'ye-call-it? the tumpany; a third says 'tis a slow fever; a fourth says the rheumatiz; a fifth—

Greg. What are the symptoms?

Davy. Symptoms, sir?

Greg. Ay, ay, what does she complain of?

Davy. Why, she is always craving and craving for drink ; eats nothing at all. Then her legs are swelled up as big as a good hand-some post, and as cold they be as a stone.

Greg. Come to the purpose, speak to the purpose, my friend.

[*Holding out his hand.*]

Davy. The purpose is, sir, that I am come to ask what your worship pleases to have done with her.

Greg. Pshaw, pshaw, pshaw ! I don't understand one word what you mean.

James. His wife is sick, doctor ; and he has brought you a guinea for your advice. Give it the doctor, friend.

[*DAVY gives the guinea.*]

Greg. Ay, now I understand you ; here's a gentleman explains the case. You say your wife is sick of the dropsy ?

Davy. Yes, an't please your worship.

Greg. Well, I have made a shift to comprehend your meaning at last ; you have the strangest way of describing a distemper ! You say your wife is always calling for drink : let her have as much as she desires ! She can't drink too much ; and, d'ye hear ? give her this piece of cheese.

Davy. Cheese, sir !

Greg. Ay, cheese, sir ! The cheese of which this is a part has cured more people of a dropsy than ever had it.

Davy. I give your worship a thousand thanks ; I'll go make her take it immediately.

[*Exit.*]

Greg. Go ; and, if she dies, be sure to bury her after the best manner you can.

SCENE XII.

GREGORY, DORCAS.

Dorc. I am like to pay severely for my frolic, if I have lost my husband by it.

Greg. O, physic and matrimony ! my wife !

Dorc. For, though the rogue used me a little roughly, he was as good a workman as any in five miles of his head.

AIR IV.—*Thomas, I cannot.*

A fig for the dainty civil spouse,
Who's bred at the court of France ;
He treats his wife with smiles and bows,
And minds not the good main chance,
Be Gregory
The man for me,
Though given to many a maggot ;
For he would work
Like any Turk ;
None like him e'er handled a fagot, a fagot,
None like him e'er handled a fagot.

N

Greg. What evil stars have sent her hither? If I could but persuade her to take a pill or two that I'd give her, I should be a physician to some purpose.—Come hider, shild, letta me feela your pulse.

Dorc. What have you to do with my pulse?

Greg. I am de French physicion, my dear; and I am to feel a de pulse of the pation.

Dorc. Yes, but I am no pation, sir; nor want no physicion, good Doctor Ragou.

Greg. Begar, you must be putta to bed, and take a de peel; me sal give you de litle peel dat sal cure you, as you have more distempreden evere were hered off.

Dorc. What's the matter with the fool? If you feel my pulse any more, I shall feel your ears for you.

Greg. Begar, you must taka de peel.

Dorc. Begar, I shall not taka de peel.

Greg. I'll take this opportunity to try her. [*Aside.*—Maye dear, if you will not letta me cura you, you sal cura me; you sal be my physicion, and I will give you de fee. [*Holds out a purse.*

Dorc. Ay, my stomach does not go against those pills. And what must I do for your fee?

Greg. Oh! begar, me vill show you; me vill teacha you what you sal doe. You must come kissa me now; you must come kissa me.

Dorc. [*kisses him.*] As I live, my very hang-dog! I've discovered him in good time, or he had discovered me.—[*Aside.*] Well, doctor, and are you cured now?

Greg. [*aside.*]—Dis is not a propre place; dis is too public; for, sud any one pass by while I take dis physic, it vill preventa de opperation.

Dorc. What physic, doctor?

Greg. In your ear dat.

[*Whispers.*

Dorc. And in your ear dat, sirrah.—[*hitting him a box.*] Do you dare affront my virtue, you villain? Do you think the world should bribe me? There, take your purse again.

Greg. But where's the gold?

Dorc. The gold I'll keep as an eternal monument of my virtue.

Greg. Oh, what a happy dog am I, to find my wife so virtuous a woman when I least expected it! Oh, my injured dear! behold your Gregory, your own husband!

Dorc. Ha!

Greg. Oh me! I'm so full of joy, I cannot tell thee more than that I am as much the happiest of men as thou art the most virtuous of women.

Dorc. And art thou really my Gregory? And hast thou any more of these purses?

Greg. No, my dear, I have no more about me; but 'tis probable in a few days I may have a hundred: for the strangest accident has happened to me.

Dorc. Yes, my dear ; but I can tell you whom you are obliged to for that accident. Had you not beaten me this morning, I had never had you beaten into a physician.

Greg. Oh, ho ! then 'tis to you I owe all that drubbing ?

Dorc. Yes, my dear, though I little dreamt of the consequence.

Greg. How infinitely I'm obliged to thee !—But hush !

SCENE XIII.

GREGORY, HELLEBOR.

Hel. Are not you the great doctor just come to this town, so famous for curing dumbness.

Greg. Sir, I am he.

Hel. Then, sir, I should be glad of your advice.

Greg. Let me feel your pulse.

Hel. Not for myself, good doctor : I am myself, sir, a brother of the faculty—what the world calls a mad doctor. I have at present under my care a patient whom I can by no means prevail with to speak.

Greg. I shall make him speak, sir.

Hel. It will add, sir, to the great reputation you have already acquired ; and I am happy in finding you.

Greg. Sir, I am as happy in finding you. You see that woman there : she is possessed with a more strange sort of madness, and imagines every man she sees to be her husband. Now, sir, if you will but admit her into your house—

Hel. Most willingly, sir.

Greg. The first thing, sir, you are to do, is to let out thirty ounces of her blood ; then, sir, you are to shave off all her hair ; all her hair, sir ; after which you are to make a very severe use of your rod twice a day ; and take particular care that she have not the least allowance beyond bread and water.

Hel. Sir, I shall readily agree to the dictates of so great a man ; nor can I help approving of your method, which is exceeding mild and wholesome.

Greg. [*to his wife.*] My dear, that gentleman will conduct you to my lodging. Sir, I beg you will take a particular care of the lady.

Hel. You may depend on't, sir, nothing in my power shall be wanting ; you have only to inquire for Dr. Hellebor.

Dorc. 'Twon't be long before I see you, husband ?

Hel. Husband ! This is as unaccountable a madness as any I have yet met with. [*Exit with DORCAS.*]

SCENE XIV.

GREGORY, LEANDER.

Greg. I think I shall be revenged of you now, my dear. So, sir.

Lean. I think I make a pretty good apothecary now.

Greg. Yes, faith, you're almost as good an apothecary as I am a physician; and if you please I'll convey you to the patient.

Lean. If I did but know a few physical hard words.

Greg. A few physical hard words! why, in a few physical hard words consists the science. Would you know as much as the whole faculty in an instant, sir? Come along, come along. Hold, let me go first; the doctor must always go before the apothecary.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE XV.—SIR JASPER'S *House*.

SIR JASPER, CHARLOT, MAID, GREGORY, LEANDER.

Jasp. Has she made no attempt to speak yet?

Maid. Not in the least, sir; so far from it, that, as she used to make a sort of noise before, she is now quite silent.

Jasp. [*Looking on his watch.*] 'Tis almost the time the doctor promised to return. Oh! he is here. Doctor, your servant.

Greg. Well, sir, how does my patient?

Jasp. Rather worse, sir, since your prescription.

Greg. So much the better; 'tis a sign that it operates.

Jasp. Who is that gentleman, pray, with you?

Greg. An apothecary, sir. Mr. Apothecary, I desire you would immediately apply that song I prescribed.

Jasp. A song, doctor? prescribe a song!

Greg. Prescribe a song, sir! Yes, sir, prescribe a song, sir. Is there anything so strange in that? Did you never hear of pills to purge melancholy? If you understand these things better than I, why did you send for me. Yes, sir, this song would make a stone speak. But if you please, sir, you and I will confer at some distance during the application; for this song will do you as much harm as it will do your daughter good. Be sure, Mr. Apothecary, to pour it down her ears very closely.

AIR V.

Lean. Thus, lovely patient Charlot sees
Her dying patient kneel:
Soon cured will be your feigned disease,
But what physician e'er can ease
The torments which I feel?
Think, skilful nymph, while I complain,
Ah, think what I endure;
All other remedies are vain;
The lovely cause of all my pain
Can only cause my cure.

Greg. It is, sir, a great and subtle question among the doctors, whether women are more easy to be cured than men. I beg you

would attend to this, sir, if you please. Some say no ; others say yes ; and for my part I say both yes and no, forasmuch as the incongruity of the opaque humours that meet in the natural temper of women are the cause that the brutal part will always prevail over the sensible. One sees that the inequality of their opinions depends on the black movement of the circle of the moon ; and as the sun, that darts his rays upon the concavity of the earth, finds——

Charl. No, I am not at all capable of changing my opinion.

Jasp. My daughter speaks ! my daughter speaks ! Oh, the great power of physic ! Oh, the admirable physician ! How can I reward thee for such a service ?

Greg. This distemper has given me a most insufferable deal of trouble.

[Traversing the stage in a great heat, the apothecary following.]

Charl. Yes, sir, I have recovered my speech ; but I have recovered it to tell you that I never will have any husband but Leander.

[Speaks with great eagerness, and drives SIR JASPER round the stage.]

Jasp. But——

Charl. Nothing is capable to shake the resolution I have taken.

Jasp. What !

Charl. Your rhetoric is in vain, all your discourses signify nothing.

Jasp. I——

Charl. I am determined, and all the fathers in the world shall never oblige me to marry contrary to my inclinations.

Jasp. I have——

Charl. I never will submit to this tyranny ; and, if I must not have the man I like, I'll die a maid.

Jasp. You shall have Mr. Dapper——

Charl. No, not in any manner, not in the least, not at all ; you throw away your breath, you lose your time ; you may confine me, beat me, bruise me, destroy me, kill me, do what you will, use me as you will, but I never will consent ; nor all your threats, nor all your blows, nor all your ill-usage, never shall force me to consent ; so far from giving him my heart, I never will give him my hand ; for he is my aversion, I hate the very sight of him ; I had rather see the devil, I had rather touch a toad ; you may make me miserable any other way, but with him you shan't, that I'm resolved.

Greg. There, sir—there, I think, we have brought her tongue to a pretty tolerable consistency.

Jasp. Consistency, quotha ! why, there is no stopping her tongue. Dear doctor, I desire you would make her dumb again.

Greg. That's impossible, sir ; all that I can do to serve you is, I can make you deaf, if you please.

Jasp. And do you think——

Charl. All your reasoning shall never conquer my resolution,

Jasp. You shall marry Mr. Dapper this evening.

Charl. I'll be buried first.

Greg. Stay, sir, stay ; let me regulate this affair ; it is a distemper that possesses her, and I know what remedy to apply to it.

Jasp. It is impossible, sir, than you can cure the distempers of the mind.

Greg. Sir, I can cure anything. Hark ye, Mr. Apothecary, you see that the love she has for Leander is entirely contrary to the will of her father, and that there is no time to lose, and that an immediate remedy is necessary : for my part, I know of but one, which is a dose of purgative running-away, mixed with two drachms of pills matrimoniac, and three large handfuls of arbor vitæ ; perhaps she will make some difficulty to take them ; but as you are an able apothecary I shall trust you for the success : go, make her walk in the garden : be sure you lose no time : to the remedy, quick, to the remedy specific.

SCENE XVI.

SIR JASPER, GREGORY.

Jasp. What drugs, sir, were those I heard you mention, for I don't remember I ever heard them spoke of before ?

Greg. They are some, sir, lately discovered by the Royal Society.

Jasp. Did you ever see anything equal to her insolence ?

Greg. Daughters are indeed sometimes a little too headstrong.

Jasp. You cannot imagine, sir, how foolishly fond she is of that Leander.

Greg. The heat of blood, sir, causes that in young minds.

Jasp. For my part, the moment I discovered the violence of her passion I have always kept her locked up.

Greg. You have done very wisely.

Jasp. And I have prevented them from having the least communication together, for who knows what might have been the consequence ? Who knows but she might have taken it into her head to have run away with him.

Greg. Very true.

Jasp. Ay, sir, let me alone for governing girls ; I think I have some reason to be vain on that head ; I think I have shown the world that I understand a little of women—I think I have ; and let me tell you, sir, there is not a little art required. If this girl had had some fathers, they had not kept her out of the hands of so vigilant a lover as I have done.

Greg. No, certainly, sir.

SCENE XVII.

SIR JASPER, DORCAS, GREGORY.

Dorc. Where is this villain, this rogue, this pretended physician?*Fasp.* Heyday! what, what, what's the matter now?*Dorc.* Oh, sirrah! sirrah!—would you have destroyed your wife, you villain! Would you have been guilty of murder, dog?*Greg.* Hoity, toity!—What mad woman is this?*Fasp.* Poor wretch! for pity's sake cure her, doctor.*Greg.* Sir, I shall not cure her unless somebody gives me a fee. If you will give me a fee, Sir Jasper, you shall see me cure her this instant.*Dorc.* I'll fee you, you villain.—Cure me!

AIR VI.

If you hope by your skill
To give Dorcas a pill,
You are not a deep politician:
Could wives but be brought
To swallow the draught,
Each husband would be a physician.

SCENE XVIII.

SIR JASPER, GREGORY, DORCAS, JAMES.

James. Oh, sir! undone, undone! Your daughter is run away with her lover Leander, who was here disguised like an apothecary; and this is the rogue of a physician who has contrived all the affair.*Fasp.* How! am I abused in this manner? Here, who is there? Bid my clerk bring pen, ink, and paper: I'll send this fellow to jail immediately.*James.* Indeed, my good doctor, you stand a very fair chance to be hanged for stealing an heiress.*Greg.* Yes, indeed, I believe I shall take my degrees now.*Dorc.* And are they going to hang you, my dear husband?*Greg.* You see, my dear wife.*Dorc.* Had you finished the fagots it had been some consolation.*Greg.* Leave me, or you'll break my heart.*Dorc.* No, I'll stay to encourage you at your death—nor will I budge an inch till I've seen you hanged.

SCENE XIX.

*To them, LEANDER, CHARLOT.**Lean.* Behold, sir, that Leander, whom you had forbid your house, restores your daughter to your power, even when he had her in his. I will receive her, sir, only at your hands. I have received letters

by which I have learned the death of an uncle, whose estate far exceeds that of your intended son-in-law.

Jasp. Sir, your virtue is beyond all estates, and I give you my daughter with all the pleasure in the world.

Lean. Now, my fortune makes me happy indeed, my dear Charlotte. And, doctor, I'll make thy fortune too.

Greg. If you would be so kind to make me a physician in earnest, I should desire no other fortune.

Lean. Faith, doctor, I wish I could do that in return for your having made me an apothecary; but I'll do as well for thee, I warrant.

Dorc. So, so, our physician, I find, has brought about fine matters. And is it not owing to me, sirrah, that you have been a physician at all?

Jasp. May I beg to know whether you are a physician or not—or what the devil you are?

Greg. I think, sir, after the miraculous cure you have seen me perform, you have no reason to ask whether I am a physician or no. And for you, wife, I'll henceforth have you behave with all deference to my greatness.

Dorc. Why, thou puffed up fool, I could have made as good a physician myself; the cure was owing to the apothecary, not the doctor.

AIR VII.—*We've cheated the parson, &c.*

When tender young virgins look pale and complain,
You may send for a dozen great doctors in vain;
All give their opinion, and pocket their fees;
Each writes her a cure, though all miss her disease:
Powders, drops,
Juleps, slops,
A cargo of poison from physical shops.

Though they physic to death the unhappy poor maid,
What's that to the doctor—since he must be paid?
Would you know how you may manage her right?
Our doctor has brought you a nostrum to-night:
Never vary
Nor miscarry,
If the lover be but the apothecary.

THE MISER.

(MOLIÈRE'S "L'AVARE.")

By HENRY FIELDING.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LOVEGOLD, *the miser.*

FREDERICK, *his son.*

CLEKMONT.

RAMILIE, *servant to Frederick.*

MR. DECOY, *a broker.*

MR. FURNISH, *an upholsterer.*

MR. SPARKLE, *a jeweller.*

MR. SATTIN, *a mercer.*

MR. LIST, *a tailor.*

CHARLES BUBBLEBOY, *a lawyer.*

HARRIET, *daughter to Lovegold.*

MRS. WISELY.

MARIANA.

LAPPET, *maid to Harriet.*

WHEEDLE, *maid to Mariana.*

SERVANTS, &c.

SCENE.—LONDON.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—LOVEGOLD'S *House.*

LAPPET, RAMILIE.

Lap. I'll hear no more. Perfidious fellow! Have I for thee slighted so many good matches? Have I for thee turned off Sir Oliver's steward, and my Lord Landy's butler, and several others, thy betters, and all to be affronted in so public a manner?

Ram. Do but hear me, madam.

Lap. If thou would'st have neglected me, was there nobody else to dance a minuet with but Mrs. Susan Cross-stich, whom you know to be my utter aversion?

Ram. Curse on all balls! henceforth I shall hate the sound of a violin.

Lap. I have more reason, I am sure, after having been the jest of the whole company: what must they think of me when they see you, after I have countenanced your addresses in the eye of the world, take out another lady before me?

Ram. I'm sure the world must think worse of me, did they imagine, madam, I could prefer any other to you.

Lap. None of your wheedling, sir; that won't do. If you ever hope to speak to me more, let me see you affront the little minx in the next assembly you meet her.

Ram. I'll do it ; and luckily, you know, we are to have a ball at my Lord Landy's the first night he lies out of town, where I'll give your revenge ample satisfaction.

Lap. On that condition I pardon you this time ; but if ever you do the like again——

Ram. May I be banished for ever from those dear eyes, and be turned out of the family while you live in it !

SCENE II.

LAPPET, WHEEDLE, RAMILIE.

Whe. Dear Mrs. Lappet !

Lap. My dear, this is extremely kind.

Whe. It is what all your acquaintance must do that expect to see you. It is in vain to hope for the favour of a visit.

Lap. Nay, dear creature, now you are barbarous ; my young lady has staid at home so much, I have not had one moment to myself ; the first time I had gone out, I am sure, madam, would have been to wait on Mrs. Wheedle.

Whe. My lady has staid at home too pretty much lately. Oh, Mr. Ramilie, are you confined too ? your master does not stay at home, I am sure ; he can find the way to our house though you can't.

Ram. That is the only happiness, madam, I envy him ; but, faith ! I don't know how it is in this parliament time, one's whole days are so taken up in the Court of Request, and one's evenings at quadrille, the deuce take me if I have seen one opera since I came to town. Oh ! now I mention operas, if you have a mind to see Cato, I believe I can steal my master's silver ticket ; for I know he is engaged to-morrow with some gentlemen who never leave their bottle for music.

Lap. Ah, the savages !

Whe. No one can say that of you, Mr. Ramilie ; you prefer music to everything——

Ram. ——But the ladies—[*bell rings.*] So, there's my summons.

Lap. Well, but shall we never have a party of quadrille more !

Whe. O, don't name it. I have worked my eyes out since I saw you ; for my lady has taken a whim of flourishing all her old cambric pinners and handkerchiefs ; in short, my dear, no journey-woman sempstress is half so much a slave as I am.

Lap. Why do you stay with her ?

Whe. La, child, where can one better oneself ? all the ladies of our acquaintance are just the same. Besides, there are some little things that make amends ; my lady has a whole train of admirers.

Ram. That, madam, is the only circumstance wherein she has the honour of resembling you—[*bell rings louder.*] You hear, madam, I am obliged to leave you—[*bell rings.*] So, so, so ; would the bell were in your guts !

SCENE III.

LAPPET, WHEEDLE.

Lap. Oh! Wheedle! I am quite sick of this family; the old gentleman grows more covetous every day he lives. Everything is under lock and key: I can scarce ask you to eat or drink.

Whe. Thank you, my dear; but I have drank half a dozen dishes of chocolate already this morning.

Lap. Well; but, my dear, I have a whole budget of news to tell you. I have made some notable discoveries.

Whe. Pray let us hear them. I have some secrets of our family too, which you shall know by and by. What a pleasure there is in having a friend to tell these things to!

Lap. You know, my dear, last summer my young lady had the misfortune to be overset in a boat between Richmond and Twickenham, and that a certain young gentleman, plunging immediately into the water, saved her life at the hazard of his own. Oh! I shall never forget the figure she made at her return home, so wet, so draggled—ha, ha, ha!

Whe. Yes, my dear, I know how all your fine ladies look when they are never so little disordered—they have no need to be so vain of themselves.

Lap. You are no stranger to my master's way of rewarding people. When the poor gentleman brought Miss home, my master meets them at the door, and, without asking any question, very civilly shuts it against him. Well, for a whole fortnight afterwards I was continually entertained with the young spark's bravery, and gallantry, and generosity, and beauty.

Whe. I can easily guess; I suppose she was rather warmed than cooled by the water. These mistresses of ours, for all their pride, are made of just the same flesh and blood as we are.

Lap. About a month ago my young lady goes to the play in an undress, and takes me with her. We sat in Burton's box, where, as the devil would have it, whom should we meet with but this very gentleman! her blushes soon discovered to me who he was; in short, the gentleman entertained her the whole play, and I much mistake if ever she was so agreeably entertained in her life. Well, as we were going out, a rude fellow thrusts his hand into my lady's bosom; upon which her champion fell upon him, and did so maul him! My lady fainted away in my arms; but as soon as she came to herself—had you seen how she looked on him! Ah! sir, says she, in a mighty pretty tone, sure you were born for my deliverance: he handed her into a hackney coach, and set us down at home. From this moment letters began to fly on both sides.

Whe. And you took care to see the post paid, I hope?

Lap. Never fear that. And now, what do you think we have contrived among us? We have got this very gentleman into the house in the quality of my master's clerk.

Whe. So ! here's fine billing and cooing, I warrant : Miss is in a fine condition.

Lap. Her condition is pretty much as it was yet. How long it will continue so I know not. I am making up my matters as fast as I can ; for this house holds not me after the discovery.

Whe. I think you have no great reason to lament the loss of a place where the master keeps his own keys.

Lap. The deuce take the first inventor of locks, say I ! but come, my dear, there is one key which I keep, and that, I believe, will furnish us with some sweetmeats ; so, if you will walk in with me, I'll tell you a secret which concerns your family. It is in your power, perhaps, to be serviceable to me ; I hope, my dear, you will keep these secrets safe ; for one would not have it known that one publishes all the affairs of a family, while one stays in it. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Garden.*

CLERMONT, HARRIET.

Cler. Why are you melancholy, my dear Harriet ? do you repent that promise of yours which has made me the happiest of mankind ?

Har. You little know my heart, if you can think it capable of repenting anything I have done towards your happiness ; if I am melancholy, it is that I have it not in my power to make you as happy as I would.

Cler. Thou art too bounteous. Every tender word from those dear lips lays obligations on me I never can repay ; but if to love, to dote on you more than life itself, to watch your eyes that I may obey your wishes before you speak them, can discharge me from any part of that vast debt I owe you, I will be punctual in the payment.

Har. It were ungenerous in me to doubt you ; and when I think what you have done for me, believe me, I must think the balance on your side.

Cler. Generous creature ! and dost thou not for me hazard the eternal anger of your father, the reproaches of your family, the censures of the world, who always blame the conduct of the person who sacrifices interest to any consideration ?

Har. As for the censures of the world, I despise them, while I do not deserve them ; folly is forwarder to censure wisdom than wisdom folly. I were weak indeed not to embrace real happiness, because the world does not call it so.

Cler. But see, my dearest, your brother is come into the garden.

Har. Is it not safe, think you, to let him into our secret ?

Cler. You know, by outwardly humouring your father, in railing against the extravagance of young men, I have brought him to look on me as his enemy : it will be first proper to set him right in that point. Besides, in managing the old gentleman, I shall still be obliged to a behaviour which the impatience of his temper may not

bear ; therefore I think it not advisable to trust him, at least yet—he will observe us. Adieu, my heart's only joy !

Har. Honest creature ! What happiness may I propose in a life with such a husband ! What is there in grandeur to recompense the loss of him ? Parents choose as often ill for us as we for ourselves. They are too apt to forget how seldom true happiness lives in a palace, or rides in a coach and six.

SCENE V.

FREDERICK, HARRIET.

Fred. Dear Harriet, good-morrow ; I am glad to find you alone, for I have an affair to impart to you that I am ready to burst with.

Har. You know, brother, I am a trusty confidant.

Fred. As ever wore petticoats ; but this is an affair of such consequence—

Har. Or it were not worth your telling me.

Fred. Nor your telling again : in short, you never could discover it ; I could afford you ten years to guess it in. I am—you will laugh immoderately when you know it. I am—it is impossible to tell you. In a word—I am in love.

Har. In love !

Fred. Violently, to distraction !—so much in love, that, without more hopes than I at present see any possibility of obtaining, I cannot live three days.

Har. And has this violent distemper, pray, come upon you of a sudden ?

Fred. No, I have bred it a long time. It hath been growing these several weeks. I stifled it as long as I could ; but it is now come to a crisis, and I must either have the woman, or you will have no brother.

Har. But who is this woman ? for you have concealed it so well that I can't even guess.

Fred. In the first place, she is a most intolerable coquette.

Har. That is a description I shall never find her out by. There are so many of her sisters, you might as well tell me the colour of her complexion.

Fred. Secondly, she is almost eternally at cards.

Har. You must come to particulars. I shall never discover your mistress till you tell more than that she is a woman and lives in this town.

Fred. Her fortune is very small.

Har. I find you are enumerating her charms.

Fred. Oh ! I have only shown you the reverse ; but were you to behold the medal on the right side, you would see beauty, wit, gentleness, politeness—in a word, you would see Mariana.

Har. Mariana ! ha, ha, ha ! you have started a wild-goose chase, indeed ! But, if you could ever prevail on her, you may depend on

it, it is an arrant impossibility to prevail on my father, and you may easily imagine what success a disinherited son may likely expect with a woman of her temper.

Fred. I know 'tis difficult, but nothing's impossible to love, at least nothing's impossible to woman ; and therefore, if you and the ingenious Mrs. Lappet will but lay your heads together in my favour, I shall be far from despairing ; and in return, sister, for this kindness——

Har. And in return, brother, for this kindness, you may perhaps have it in your power to do me a favour of pretty much the same nature.

Love. [*without.*] Rogue ! villain !

Har. So ! what's the matter now ? what can have thrown my father into this passion ?

Fred. The loss of an old slipper, I suppose, or something of equal consequence. Let us step aside into the next walk, and talk more of our affairs.

SCENE VI.

LOVEGOLD, RAMILIE.

Love. Answer me not, sirrah ; but get you out of my house.

Ram. Sir, I am your son's servant, and not yours, sir ; and I won't go out of the house, sir, unless I am turned out by my proper master, sir.

Love. Sirrah, I'll turn your master out after you, like an extravagant rascal as he is ; he has no need of a servant while he is in my house ; and here he dresses out a fellow at more expense than a prudent man might clothe a large family at ; it's plain enough what use he keeps you for ; but I will have no spy upon my affairs, no rascal continually prying into all my actions, devouring all I have, and hunting about in every corner to see what he may steal.

Ram. Steal ! a likely thing, indeed, to steal from a man who locks up everything he has, and stands sentry upon it day and night.

Love. I'm all over in a sweat lest this fellow should suspect something of my money—[*aside.*] Harkee, rascal, come hither ; I would advise you not to run about the town and tell everybody you meet that I have money hid.

Ram. Why, have you any money hid, sir ?

Love. No, sirrah, I don't say I have ; but you may raise such a report, nevertheless.

Ram. 'Tis equal to me whether you have money hid or no, since I cannot find it.

Love. D'ye mutter, sirrah ? Get you out of my house, I say, get you out this instant.

Ram. Well, sir, I am going.

Love. Come back ; let me desire you to carry nothing away with you.

Ram. What should I carry?

Love. That's what I would see. These bootsleeves were certainly intended to be the receivers of stolen goods, and I wish the tailor had been hanged who invented them. Turn your pockets inside out, if you please; but you are too practised a rogue to put anything there. These bags have had many a good thing in them, I warrant you.

Ram. Give me my bag, sir; I am in the most danger of being robbed.

Love. Come, come, be honest, and return what thou hast taken from me.

Ram. Ay, sir, that I could do with all my heart, for I have taken nothing from you but some boxes on the ear.

Love. And hast thou really stolen nothing?

Ram. No really, sir.

Love. Then get out of my house while 'tis all well, and go to the devil.

Ram. Ay, anywhere from such an old covetous curmudgeon.

Love. So, there's one plague gone; now I will go pay a visit to my dear casket.

SCENE VII.

LOVEGOLD, FREDERICK, HARRIET.

Love. In short, I must find some safer place to deposit those three thousand guineas in which I received yesterday; three thousand guineas are a sum.—O heavens! I have betrayed myself! my passion has transported me to talk aloud, and I have been overheard. How now! What's the matter?

Fred. The matter, sir?

Love. Yes, the matter, sir; I suppose you can repeat more of my words than these; I suppose you have overheard——

Fred. What, sir?

Love. That——

Fred. Sir!

Love. What I was just now saying.

Har. Pardon me, sir, we really did not.

Love. Well, I see you did overhear something, and so I will tell you the whole: I was saying to myself, in this great scarcity of money, what a happiness it would be to have three thousand guineas by one; I tell you this that you might not misunderstand me, and imagine that I said I had three thousand guineas!

Fred. We enter not into your affairs, sir.

Love. Ah! would I had those three thousand guineas!

Fred. In my opinion——

Love. It would make my affairs extremely easy.

Fred. Then it is very easily in your power to raise them, sir; that the whole world knows.

Love. I raise them! I raise three thousand guineas easily! My

children are my greatest enemies, and will, by their way of talking, and by the extravagant expenses they run into, be the occasion that, one of these days, somebody will cut my throat, imagining me to be made up of nothing but guineas.

Fred. What expense, sir, do I run into?

Love. How! have you the assurance to ask me that, sir? when, if one was but to pick those fine feathers of yours off, from head to foot, one might purchase a very comfortable annuity out of them! a fellow here, with a very good fortune upon his back, wonders that he is called extravagant. In short, sir, you must rob me to appear in this manner.

Fred. How, sir! rob you?

Love. Ay, rob me; or how could you support this extravagance?

Fred. Alas, sir! there are fifty young fellows of my acquaintance that support greater extravagancies, and no one knows how. Ah, sir, there are ten thousand pretty ways of living in this town without robbing one's father.

Love. What necessity is there for all that lace on your coat? and all bought at the first hand too, I warrant you. If you will be fine, is there not such a place as Monmouth Street in this town, where a man may buy a suit for the third part of the sum which his tailor demands? And then, periwigs! what need has a man of periwigs when he may wear his own hair. I dare swear a good periwig can't cost less than fifteen or twenty shillings. Heyday! what, are they making signs to one another which shall pick my pocket?

Har. My brother and I, sir, are disputing which shall speak to you first, for we have both an affair of consequence to mention to you.

Love. And I have an affair of consequence to mention to you both. Pray, son, you who are a fine gentleman, and converse much among the ladies, what think you of a certain young lady called Mariana?

Fred. Mariana, sir?

Love. Ay, what do you think of her?

Fred. Think of her, sir?

Love. Why do you repeat my words? Ay, what do you think of her?

Fred. Why, I think her the most charming woman in the world.

Love. Would she not be a desirable match?

Fred. So desirable that, in my opinion, her husband will be the happiest of mankind.

Love. Does she not promise to make a good housewife?

Fred. Oh! the best housewife upon earth.

Love. Might not a husband, think ye, live very easy and happy with her?

Fred. Doubtless, sir.

Love. There is one thing I'm a little afraid of; that is, that she has not quite as much fortune as one might fairly expect.

Fred. Oh, sir! consider her merit, and you may easily make an

abatement in her fortune ; for Heaven's sake, sir, don't let that prevent your design. Fortune is nothing in comparison with her beauty and merit.

Love. Pardon me there ; however, there may be some matters found, perhaps, to make up some little deficiency ; and if you would, to oblige your father, retrench your extravagancies on this occasion, perhaps the difference, in some time, might be made up.

Fred. My dearest father, I'll bid adieu to all extravagance for ever.

Love. Thou art a dutiful, good boy ; and, since I find you have the same sentiments with me, provided she can but make out a pretty tolerable fortune, I am even resolved to marry her.

Fred. Ha ! you resolved to marry Mariana ?

Love. Ay, to marry Mariana.

Har. Who, you, you, you ?

Love. Yes, I, I, I.

Fred. I beg you will pardon me, sir ; a sudden dizziness has seized me, and I must beg leave to retire.

SCENE VIII.

LOVEGOLD, HARRIET.

Love. This, daughter, is what I have resolved for myself ; as for your brother, I have a certain widow in my eye for him ; and you, my dear, shall marry our good neighbour, Mr. Spindle.

Har. I marry Mr. Spindle !

Love. Yes ; he is a prudent, wise man, not much above fifty, and has a great fortune in the Funds.

Har. I thank you, my dear papa, but I had rather not marry, if you please.

Love. [*mimicking her curtsey.*] I thank you, my good daughter, but I had rather you should marry him, if you please.

Har. Pardon me, dear sir.

Love. Pardon me, dear madam.

Har. Not all the fathers on earth shall force me to it.

Love. Did ever mortal hear a girl talk in this manner to her father ?

Har. Did ever father attempt to marry his daughter after such a manner ? In short, sir, I have ever been obedient to you ; but, as this affair concerns my happiness only, and not yours, I hope you will give me leave to consult my own inclination.

Love. I would not have you provoke me ; I am resolved upon the match.

SCENE IX.

LOVEGOLD, CLERMONT, HARRIET.

Cler. Some people, sir, upon justice business, desire to speak with your worship.

Love. I can attend to no business, this girl has so perplexed me. Hussy, you shall marry as I would have you, or——

Cler. Forgive my interposing; dear sir, what's the matter? Madam, let me entreat you not to put your father into a passion.

Love. Clermont, you are a prudent young fellow. Here's a baggage of a daughter, who refuses the most advantageous match that ever was offered, both to her and to me. A man of a vast estate offers to take her without a portion.

Cler. Without a portion! Consider, dear madam; can you refuse a gentleman who offers to take you without a portion?

Love. Ay, consider what that saves your father.

Har. Yes, but I consider what I am to suffer.

Cler. That's true, indeed; you will think on that, sir. Though money be the first thing to be considered in all affairs of life, yet some little regard should be had in this case to inclination.

Love. Without a portion.

Cler. You are in the right, sir; that decides the thing at once; and yet I know there are people who, on this occasion, object against a disparity of age and temper, which too often make the married state utterly miserable.

Love. Without a portion.

Cler. Ah! there is no answering that. Who can oppose such a reason as that? And yet there are several parents who study the inclinations of their children more than any other thing, that would by no means sacrifice them to interest, and who esteem, as the very first article of marriage, that happy union of affections which is the foundation of every blessing attending on a married state, and who——

Love. Without a portion.

Cler. Very true; that stops your mouth at once. Without a portion! Where is the person who can find an argument against that?

Love. Ha! is not that the barking of a dog? Some villains are in search of my money. Don't stir from hence; I'll return in an instant.

Cler. My dearest Harriet, how shall I express the agony I am in on your account?

Har. Be not too much alarmed, since you may depend on my resolution. It may be in the power of fortune to delay our happiness, but no power shall force me to destroy your hopes by any other match.

Cler. Thou kindest, lovely creature.

Love. Thank Heaven, it was nothing but my fear.

Cler. Yes, a daughter must obey her father; she is not to consider the shape, or the air, or the age of a husband; but when a man offers to take her without a portion, she is to have him, let him be what he will.

Love. Admirably well said, indeed.

Cler. Madam, I ask your pardon if my love for yourself and your

family carries me a little too far. Be under no concern, I dare swear I shall bring her to it. [To LOVEGOLD.

Love. Do, do; I'll go in and see what these people want with me. Give her a little more now, while she's warm; you will be time enough to draw the warrant.

Cler. When a lover offers, madam, to take a daughter without a portion, one should inquire no farther; everything is contained in that one article; and "without a portion," supplies the want of beauty, youth, family, wisdom, honour, and honesty.

Love. Gloriously said! spoke like an oracle. [Exit.

Cler. So, once more we are alone together. Believe me, this is a most painful hypocrisy; it tortures me to oppose your opinion, though I am not in earnest, nor suspected by you of being so. Oh, Harriet! how is the noble passion of love abused by vulgar souls, who are incapable of tasting its delicacies! When love is great as mine,

None can its pleasures, or its pains declare;

We can but feel how exquisite they are. [Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

FREDERICK, RAMILIE.

Fred. What is the reason, sirrah, you have been out of the way when I gave you orders to stay here?

Ram. Yes, sir, and here did I stay, according to your orders, till your good father turned me out; and it is, sir, at the extreme hazard of a cudgel that I return back again.

Fred. Well, sir, and what answer have you brought touching the money?

Ram. Ah, sir! it is a terrible thing to borrow money; a man must have dealt with the devil to deal with a scrivener.

Fred. Then it won't do, I suppose.

Ram. Pardon me, sir. Mr. Decoy, the broker, is a most industrious person; he says he has done everything in his power to serve you, for he has taken a particular fancy to your honour.

Fred. So then I shall have the five hundred, shall I?

Ram. Yes, sir, but there are some trifling conditions which your honour must submit to before the affair can be finished.

Fred. Did he bring you to the speech of the person that is to lend the money?

Ram. Ah, sir! things are not managed in that manner; he takes more care to conceal himself than you do; there are greater mysteries in these matters than you imagine; why, he would not so much as tell me the lender's name; and he is to bring him to-day to talk with you in some third person's house, to learn from your own mouth the particulars of your estate and family. I dare swear the very name of your father will make all things easy.

Fred. Chiefly the death of my mother, whose jointure no one can hinder me of.

Ram. Here, sir, I have brought the articles ; Mr. Decoy told me he took them from the mouth of the person himself. Your honour will find them extremely reasonable ; the broker was forced to stickle hard to get such good ones. In the first place, the lender is to see all his securities ; and the borrower must be of age, and heir apparent to a large estate, without flaw in the title, and entirely free from all incumbrance ; and, that the lender may run as little risk as possible, the borrower must insure his life for the sum lent ; if he be an officer in the army, he is to make over his whole pay for the payment of both principal and interest, which, that the lender may not burthen his conscience with any scruples, is to be no more than thirty per cent.

Fred. Oh, the conscientious rascal !

Ram. But, as the said lender has not by him at present the sum demanded, and that to oblige the borrower he is himself forced to borrow of another at the rate of four per cent., he thinks it but reasonable that the first borrower, over and above the thirty per cent. aforesaid, shall also pay this four per cent., since it is for his service only that the sum is borrowed.

Fred. Plague on him ! what a Jew is here !

Ram. You know, sir, what you have to do—he can't oblige you to these terms.

Fred. Nor can I oblige him to lend me the money without them ; and you know that I must have it, let the conditions be what they will.

Ram. Ay, sir, why that was what I told him.

Fred. Did you so, rascal ? no wonder he insists on such conditions if you laid open my necessities to him.

Ram. Alas ! sir, I only told it to the broker, who is your friend, and has your interest very much at heart.

Fred. Well, is this all, or are there any more reasonable articles ?

Ram. Of the five hundred pounds required, the lender can pay down in cash no more than four hundred ; and for the rest, the borrower must take in goods, of which here follows the catalogue.

Fred. What, in the name of nonsense, is the meaning of all this ?

Ram. Imprimis. One large yellow camblet bed, lined with satin, very little eaten by the moths, and wanting only one curtain. Six stuffed chairs of the same, a little torn, and the frames worm-eaten ; otherwise not in the least the worse for wearing. One large pier-glass, with only one crack in the middle. One suit of tapestry hangings, in which are curiously wrought the loves of Mars and Venus, Venus and Adonis, Cupid and Psyche, with many other amorous stories, which make the hangings very proper for a bedchamber.

Fred. What the deuce is here ?

Ram. Item, One suit of drugget, with silver buttons, the buttons only the worse for wearing. *Item,* Two muskets, one of which only wants the lock. One large silver watch, with Tompion's name to it. One snuff-box, with a picture in it, bought at Mr. Deard's; a proper present for a mistress. Five pictures without frames; it not originals, all copies by good hands; and one fine frame without a picture.

Fred. Oons! what use have I for all this!

Ram. Several valuable books, amongst which are all the journals printed for these five years last past, handsomely bound and lettered. The whole works in divinity of——

Fred. Read no more; confound the rascally extortioner! I shall pay 100 per cent.

Ram. Ah, sir! I wish your honour would consider of it in time.

Fred. I must have money. To what straits are we reduced by the hard avarice of fathers! Well may we wish them dead, when their death is the only introduction to our living.

Ram. Such a father as yours, sir, is enough to make one do something more than wish him dead. For my part, I have never had any inclination towards hanging; and, I thank heaven, I have lived to see whole sets of my companions swing out of the world, while I have had address enough to quit all manner of gallantries the moment I smelt the halter; I have always had an utter aversion to the smell of hemp; but this rogue of a father of yours, sir—sir, I ask your pardon—has so provoked me, that I have often wished to rob him, and rob him I shall in the end, that's certain.

Fred. Give me that paper, that I may consider a little these moderate articles.

SCENE II.

LOVEGOLD, DECOY, RAMILIE, FREDERICK.

Dec. In short, sir, he is a very extravagant young fellow, and so pressed by his necessities, that you may bring him to what terms you please.

Love. But do you think, Mr. Decoy, there is no danger? Do you know the name, the family, and the estate of the borrower?

Dec. No, I cannot give you any perfect information yet, for it was by the greatest accident in the world that he was recommended to me; but you will learn all these from his own lips; and his man assured me you would make no difficulty the moment you knew the name of his father. All that I can tell you is, that his servant says the old gentleman is extremely rich; he called him a covetous old rascal.

Love. Ay, that is the name which these spendthrifts, and the rogues their servants, give to all honest prudent men who know the world and the value of their money.

Dec. This young gentleman is an only son, and is so little afraid

of any future competitors, that he offers to be bound, if you insist on it, that his father shall die within these eight months.

Love. Ay, there's something in that ; I believe then I shall let him have the money. Charity, Mr. Decoy, charity obliges us to serve our neighbour, I say, when we are no losers by so doing.

Dec. Very true indeed.

Ram. Heyday ! what can be the meaning of this ? our broker talking with the old gentleman !

Dec. So, gentlemen ! I see you are in great haste ; but who told you, pray, that this was the lender ? I assure you, sir, I neither discovered your name nor your house. But, however, there is no great harm done ; they are people of discretion, so you may freely transact the affair now.

Love. How !

Dec. This, sir, is the gentleman that wants to borrow the five hundred pounds I mentioned to you.

Love. How ! rascal, is it you that abandon yourself to these intolerable extravagancies ?

Fred. I must even stand buff, and outface him.—[*Aside*]. And is it you, father, that disgrace yourself by these scandalous extortions ?

[*RAMILIE and DECOY sneak off.*]

Love. Is it you that would ruin yourself by taking up money at such interest ?

Fred. Is it you that would enrich yourself by lending at such interest ?

Love. How dare you after this appear before my face ?

Fred. How dare you after this appear before the face of the world ?

Love. Get you out of my sight, villain ; get out of my sight.

Fred. Sir, I go ; but give me leave to say——

Love. I'll not hear a word. I'll prevent your attempting anything of this nature for the future. Get out of my sight, villain. I am not sorry for this accident ; it will make me henceforth keep a strict eye over his actions.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in LOVEGOLD'S House.*

HARRIET, MARIANA.

Mar. Nay, Harriet, you must excuse me ; for of all people upon earth you are my greatest favourite ; but I have had such an intolerable cold, child, that it is a miracle I have recovered ; for, my dear, would you think it ? I have had no less than three doctors.

Har. Nay, then it is a miracle you recovered indeed !

Mar. O ! child, doctors will never do me any harm ; I never take anything they prescribe : I don't know how it is, when one's ill one can't help sending for them ; and you know, my dear, my mamma loves physic better than she does anything but cards.

Har. Were I to take as much of cards as you do, I don't know which I should nauseate most.

Mar. Oh! child, you are quite a tramontane; I must bring you to like dear spadille. I protest, Harriet, if you'd take my advice in some things, you would be the most agreeable creature in the world.

Har. Nay, my dear, I am in a fair way of being obliged to obey your commands.

Mar. That would be the happiest thing in the world for you; and I dare swear you would like them extremely, for they would be exactly opposite to every command of your father's.

Har. By that, now, one would think you were married already.

Mar. Married, my dear!

Har. Oh, I can tell you of such a conquest: you will have such a lover within these four-and-twenty hours.

Mar. I am glad you have given me timely notice of it, that I may turn off somebody to make room for him; but I believe I have listed him already. Oh, Harriet! I have been so plagued, so pestered, so fatigued, since I saw you with that dear creature, your brother. In short, child, he has made arrant downright love to me; if my heart had not been harder than adamant itself, I had been your sister by this time.

Har. And if your heart be not harder than adamant, you will be in a fair way of being my mother shortly, for my good father has this very day declared such a passion for you——

Mar. Your father!

Har. Ay, my dear. What say you to a comely old gentleman of not much above threescore, that loves you so violently? I dare swear he will be constant to you all his days.

Mar. Ha! ha! ha! I shall die. Ha! ha! ha! You extravagant creature! how could you throw away all this jest at once? It would have furnished a prudent person with an annuity of laughter for life. Oh! I am charmed with my conquest; I am quite in love with him already. I never had a lover yet above half his age.

Har. Lappet and I have laid a delightful plot, if you will but come into it, and counterfeit an affection for him.

Mar. Why, child, I have a real affection for him: Oh! methinks I see you on your knees already.—Pray, mamma, please to give me your blessing. Oh! I see my loving bridegroom, in his threefold night-cap, his flannel shirt; methinks I see him approach me with all the lovely gravity of age; I hear him whisper charming sentences of morality in my ear, more instructive than all my grandmother ever taught me. Oh! I smell him sweeter; oh! sweeter than even hartshorn itself. Ha, ha, ha! See, child, how beautiful a fond imagination can paint a lover! would not any one think now we had been a happy couple together, Heaven knows how long?

Har. Well, you dear, mad creature! but do you think you can maintain any of this fondness to his face? for I know some women

who speak very fondly of a husband to other people, but never say one civil thing to the man himself.

Mar. Oh ! never fear it ! one can't indeed bring oneself to be civil to a young lover ; but as for those old fellows, I think one may play as harmlessly with them as with one another. Young fellows are perfect bears, and must be kept at a distance ; the old ones are mere lapdogs ; and, when they have agreeable tricks with them, one is equally fond of both.

Har. Well, but now I hope you will give me leave to speak a word or two seriously in favour of my poor brother.

Mar. Oh ! I shall hate you if you are serious. Auh ! see what your wicked words have occasioned ; I protest you are a conjurer, and certainly deal with the devil.

SCENE IV.

FREDERICK, MARIANA, HARRIET.

Har. Oh, brother ! I am glad you are come to plead your own cause ; I have been your solicitor in your absence.

Fred. I am afraid, like other clients, I shall plead much worse for myself than my advocate has done.

Mar. Persons who have a bad cause should have very artful counsel.

Fred. When the judge is determined against us all, art will prove of no effect.

Mar. Why then, truly, sir, in so terrible a situation, I think the sooner you give up the cause the better.

Fred. No, madam, I am resolved to persevere ; for, when one's whole happiness is already at stake, I see nothing more can be hazarded in the pursuit. It might be, perhaps, a person's interest to give up a cause wherein part of his fortune was concerned ; but when the dispute is about the whole, he can never lose by persevering.

Mar. Do you hear him, Harriet ! I fancy this brother of yours would have made a most excellent lawyer. I protest, when he is my son-in-law, I'll even send him to the Temple ; though he begins a little late, yet diligence may bring him to be a great man.

Fred. I hope, madam, diligence may succeed in love as well as law ; sure, Mariana is not a more crabbed study than Coke upon Littleton ?

Mar. Oh, the wretch ! he has quite suffocated me with his comparison : I must have a little air : dear Harriet, let us walk in the garden.

Fred. I hope, madam, I have your leave to attend you ?

Mar. My leave ! no, indeed, you have no leave of mine ; but if you will follow me, I know no way to hinder you ?

Har. Ah, brother, I wish you had no greater enemy in this affair than your mistress.

SCENE V.

RAMILIE, LAPPET.

Lap. This was, indeed, a most unlucky accident ; however, I dare lay a wager I shall succeed better with him, and get some of those guineas you would have borrowed.

Ram. I am not, madam, now to learn Mrs. Lappet's dexterity ; but if you get anything out of him I shall think you a match for the devil. Sooner than to extract gold from him, I would engage to extract religion from a hypocrite, honesty from a lawyer, health from a physician, sincerity from a courtier, or modesty from a poet. I think, my dear, you have lived long enough in this house to know that gold is a very dear commodity here.

Lap. Ah ! but there are some certain services which will squeeze it out of the closest hands ; there is one trade, which, I thank Heaven, I am no stranger to, wherein all men are dabblers ; and he who will scarce afford himself either meat or clothes, will still pay for the commodities I deal in.

Ram. Your humble servant, madam ; I find you don't know our good master yet ; there is not a woman in the world, who loves to hear her pretty self talk never so much, but you may easier shut her mouth, than open his hands : as for thanks, praises, and promises, no courtier upon earth is more liberal of them ; but for money, the devil a penny : there's nothing so dry as his caresses, and there is no husband who hates the word wife half so much as he does the word give ; instead of saying I give you a good-morrow, he always says I lend you a good-morrow.

Lap. Ah, sir ! let me alone to drain a man ; I have the secret to open his heart, and his purse too.

Ram. I defy you to drain the man we talk of of his money ; he loves that more than anything you can procure him in exchange ; the very sight of a dun throws him into convulsions ; 'tis piercing him in the only sensible part ; 'tis touching his heart, tearing out his vitals, to ask him for a farthing. But here he is, and if you get a shilling out of him I'll marry you without any other fortune.

SCENE VI.

LOVEGOLD, LAPPET.

Love. All's well, hitherto ; my dear money is safe. Is it you, Lappet ?

Lap. I should rather ask if it be you, sir ; why, you look so young and vigorous—

Love. Do I ? do I ?

Lap. Why, you grow younger and younger every day, sir ; you never looked half so young in your life, sir, as you do now. Why, sir, I know fifty young fellows of five-and-twenty that are older than you are.

Love. That may be, that may be, Lappet, considering the lives they lead ; and yet I am a good ten years above fifty.

Lap. Well, and what's ten years above fifty ; 'tis the very flower of a man's age. Why, sir, you are now in the very prime of your life.

Love. Very true, that's very true, as to understanding ; but I am afraid, could I take off twenty years, it would do me no harm with the ladies, Lappet. How goes on our affair with Mariana ? Have you mentioned anything about what her mother can give her ? For, now-a-days, nobody marries a woman unless she bring something with her besides a petticoat.

Lap. Sir ! why, sir, this young lady will be worth to you as good a thousand pounds a-year as ever was told.

Love. How ! a thousand pounds a-year ?

Lap. Yes, sir : there's in the first place the article of a table ; she has a very little stomach, she does not eat above an ounce in a fortnight ; and then, as to the quality of what she eats, you'll have no need of a French cook upon her account : as for sweetmeats, she mortally hates them ; so there is the article of desserts wiped off all at once. You'll have no need of a confectioner, who would be eternally bringing in bills for preserves, conserves, biscuits, comfits, and jellies, of which half a dozen ladies would swallow you ten pounds' worth at a meal : this, I think, we may very moderately reckon at two hundred pounds a-year at least. *Item,* For clothes, she has been bred up at such a plainness in them, that, should we allow but for three birth-night suits a-year saved, which are the least a town-lady would expect, there go a good two hundred pounds a-year more. For jewels (of which she hates the very sight), the yearly interest of what you must lay out in them would amount to one hundred pounds. Lastly, she has an utter detestation for play, at which I have known several moderate ladies lose a good two thousand pounds a-year : now let us take only the fourth part of that, which amounts to five hundred ; to which, if we add two hundred pounds on the table account, two hundred pounds in clothes, and one hundred pounds in jewels, there is, sir, your thousand pounds a-year in hard money.

Love. Ay, ay, these are pretty things, it must be confessed, very pretty things ; but there's nothing real in 'em.

Lap. How, sir ! is it not something real to bring you in marriage a vast store of sobriety, the inheritance of a great love for simplicity of dress, and a vast acquired fund of hatred for play ?

Love. This is downright raillery, Lappet, to make me up a fortune out of the expenses she won't put me to. I assure you, madam, I shall give no acquittance for what I have not received : in short, Lappet, I must touch, touch, touch something real.

Lap. Never fear, you shall touch something real. I have heard them talk of a certain country where she has a very pretty freehold, which shall be put into your hands.

Love. Nay, if it were a copyhold I should be glad to touch it ;

but there is another thing that disturbs me. You know this girl is young, and young people generally love one another's company : it would ill agree with a person of my temper to keep an assembly for all the young rakes and flaunting girls in town.

Lap. Ah, sir, how little do you know of her ! This is another particularity that I had to tell you off : she has a most terrible aversion for all young people, and loves none but persons of your years. I would advise you, above all things, to take care not to appear too young ; she insists on sixty at least. She says that fifty-six years are not able to content her.

Love. This humour is a little strange, methinks.

Lap. She carries it farther, sir, than can be imagined ; she has in her chamber several pictures ; but what do you think they are ? None of your smug-faced young fellows, your Adonises, your Cephaluses, your Parises, and your Apollos. No, sir, you see nothing there but your handsome figures of Saturn, King Priam, old Nestor, and good father Anchises upon his son's shoulders.

Love. Admirable ! This is more than I could have hoped. To say the truth, had I been a woman, I should never have loved young fellows.

Lap. I believe you. Pretty sort of stuff, indeed, to be in love with your young fellows ! Pretty masters, indeed, with their fine complexions and their fine feathers ? Now, I should be glad to taste the savour that is in any of them.

Love. And do you really think me pretty tolerable ?

Lap. Tolerable ! you are ravishing ! If your picture was drawn by a good hand, sir, it would be invaluable ! Turn about a little, if you please ; there, what can be more charming ? Let me see you walk ; there's a person for you—tall, straight, free, and *dégagée* ! Why, sir, you have no fault about you.

Love. Not many ; hem, hem ! not many, I thank Heaven ; only a few rheumatic pains now and then, and a small catarrh that seizes me sometimes.

Lap. Ah, sir, that's nothing ; your catarrh sits very well upon you, and you cough with a very good grace.

Love. But tell me, what does Mariana say of my person ?

Lap. She has a particular pleasure in talking of it ; and I assure you, sir, I have not been backward, on all such occasions, to blazon forth your merit, and to make her sensible how advantageous a match you will be to her.

Love. You did very well, and I am obliged to you.

Lap. But, sir, I have a small favour to ask of you. I have a law-suit depending, which I am on the very brink of losing for want of a little money.—[*He looks gravely.*] And you could easily procure my success, if you had the least friendship for me. You can't imagine, sir, the pleasure she takes in talking of you.—[*He looks pleased.*] Ah ! how you will delight her ! how your venerable mien will charm her ! She will never be able to withstand you. But, indeed, sir, this law-suit will be of a terrible consequence to me.—

[*He looks grave again.*] I am ruined if I lose it, which a very small matter might prevent. Ah, sir, had you but seen the raptures with which she has heard me talk of you !—[*He resumes his gaiety.*] How pleasure sparkled in her eyes at the recital of your good qualities. In short, to discover a secret to you, which I promised to conceal, I have worked up her imagination till she is downright impatient of having the match concluded.

Love. Lappet, you have acted a very friendly part ; and I own that I have all the obligations in the world to you.

Lap. I beg you would give me this little assistance, sir.—[*He looks serious.*] It will set me on my feet, and I shall be eternally obliged to you.

Love. Farewell ! I'll go and finish my despatches.

Lap. I assure you, sir, you could never assist me in a greater necessity.

Love. I must go give some orders about a particular affair.

Lap. I would not importune you, sir, if I was not forced by the last extremity.

Love. I expect the tailor about turning my coat. Don't you think this coat will look well enough turned, and with new buttons, for a wedding suit ?

Lap. For pity's sake, sir, don't refuse me this small favour ; I shall be undone, indeed, sir. If it were but so small a matter as ten pounds, sir.

Love. I think I hear the tailor's voice.

Lap. If it were but five pounds, sir ; but three pounds, sir ; nay, sir, a single guinea would be of service for a day or two. }

[*As he offers to go out on either side, she intercepts him.*]

Love. I must go ; I can't stay. Hark there ; somebody calls me. I'm very much obliged to you ; indeed, I am very much obliged to you.

Lap. Go to the gallows, like a covetous, good-for-nothing villain, as you are ! Ramilie is in the right ; however, I shall not quit the affair ; for, though I get nothing out of him, I am sure of my reward from the other side.

Fools only to one party will confide ;

Good politicians will both parties guide,

And, if one fails, they're fee'd on t'other side.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

HARRIET, FREDERICK, CLERMONT.

Fred. I think, sir, you have given my sister a very substantial proof of your affection. I am sorry you could have had such a suspicion of me as to imagine I could have been an enemy to one who has approved himself a gentleman and a lover.

Cler. If anything, sir, could add to my misfortunes, it would be

to be thus obliged, without having any prospect of repaying the obligation.

Fred. Every word you speak is a farther conviction to me that you are what you have declared yourself; for there is something in a generous education which it is impossible for persons who want that happiness to counterfeit; therefore, henceforth I beg you to believe me sincerely your friend.

Har. Come, come, pray, a truce with your compliments; for I hear my father's cough coming this way.

SCENE II.

LOVEGOLD, FREDERICK, CLERMONT, HARRIET.

Love. So, so, this is just as I would have it. Let me tell you, children, this is a prudent young man, and you cannot converse too much with him. He will teach you, sir, for all you hold your head so high, better sense than to borrow money at fifty *per cent.* And you, madam, I dare say he will infuse good things into you too, if you will but hearken to him.

Fred. While you live, sir, we shall want no other instructor.

Love. Come hither, Harriet. You know to-night I have invited our friend and neighbour, Mr. Spindle. Now, I intend to take this opportunity of saving the expense of another entertainment, by inviting Mariana and her mother; for I observe that, take what care one will, there is always more victuals provided on these occasions than is ate; and an additional guest makes no additional expense.

Cler. Very true, sir; besides, though they were to rise hungry, no one ever calls for more at another person's table.

Love. Right, honest Clermont; and to rise with an appetite is one of the wholesomest things in the world. Harriet, I would have you go immediately and carry the invitation: you may walk thither, and they will bring you back in a coach.

Har. I shall obey you, sir.

Love. Go, that's my good girl. And you, sir, I desire you would behave yourself civilly at supper.

Fred. Why should you suspect me, sir?

Love. I know, sir, with what eyes such sparks as you look upon a mother-in-law; but, if you hope for my forgiveness of your late exploit, I would advise you to behave to her in the most affectionate manner imaginable.

Fred. I cannot promise, sir, to be overjoyed at her being my mother-in-law; but this I will promise you, I will be as civil to her as you could wish. I will behold her with as much affection as you can desire me; that is an article upon which you may be sure of a most punctual obedience.

Love. That, I think, is the least I can expect.

Fred. Sir, you shall have no reason to complain.

SCENE III.

LOVEGOLD, CLERMONT, JAMES.

Gas. Did you send for me, sir?*Love.* Where have you been? for I have wanted you above an hour.*Gas.* Whom, sir, did you want? your coachman or your cook? for I am both one and t'other.*Love.* I want my cook, sir.*Gas.* I thought, indeed, it was not your coachman; for you have had no great occasion for him since your last pair of geldings were starved. But your cook, sir, shall wait on you in an instant.*[Puts off his coachman's great coat, and appears as a cook.]**Love.* What's the meaning of this folly?*Gas.* I am ready for your commands, sir.*Love.* I am engaged this evening to give a supper.*Gas.* A supper, sir! I have not heard the word this half-year. I have, indeed, now and then heard of such a thing as a dinner; but, for a supper, I have not dressed one so long, that I am afraid my hand is out.*Love.* Leave off your saucy jesting, sirrah, and see that you provide me a good supper.*Gas.* That may be done, sir, with a good deal of money.*Love.* What! is the devil in you? Always money. Can you say nothing else but money, money, money? All my servants, my children, my relations, can pronounce no other word than money.*Cler.* I never heard so ridiculous an answer. Here's a miracle for you, indeed, to make a good supper with a good deal of money! Is there anything so easy? Is there any one who can't do it? Would a man show himself to be a good cook, he must make a good supper out of a little money.*Gas.* I wish you would be so good, sir, as to show us that art, and take my office of cook upon yourself.*Love.* Peace, sirrah, and tell me what we can have.*Gas.* There's a gentleman, sir, who can furnish you out a good supper with a little money.*Love.* Answer me yourself.*Gas.* Why, sir, how many will there be at table?*Love.* About eight or ten; but I will have a supper dressed but for eight; for if there be enough for eight, there is enough for ten.*Gas.* Suppose, sir, you have at one end of the table a good handsome soup; at the other a fine Westphalia ham and chickens; on one side a fillet of veal roasted; and on the other a turkey, or rather a bustard, which, I believe, may be bought for a guinea, or thereabouts—

Love. What ! is the fellow providing an entertainment for my lord mayor and the court of aldermen ?

Fas. Then, sir, for the second course a leash of pheasants, a leash of fat poulards, half a dozen partridges, one dozen of quails, two dozen of ortolans, three dozen——

Love. [*putting his hand before JAMES'S mouth.*] Ah, villain ! you are eating up all I am worth.

Fas. Then a ragout——

Love. [*stopping his mouth again.*] Hold your extravagant tongue, sirrah.

Cler. Have you a mind to burst them all ? Has my master invited people to cram them to death ? Or do you think his friends have a mind to eat him up at one supper ? Such servants as you, Mr. James, should be often reminded of that excellent saying of a very wise man, " We must eat to live, and not live to eat."

Love. Excellently well said, indeed ! it is the finest sentence I ever heard in my life. " We must live to eat, and not eat to——" No, that is not it ; how did you say ?

Cler. That " we must eat to live, and not live to eat."

Love. Extremely fine ; pray, write them out for me ; for I'm resolved to have 'em done in letters of gold, or black and white rather, over my hall chimney.

Fas. You have no need to do any more, sir ; people talk enough of you already.

Love. Pray, sir, what do people say of me ?

Fas. Ah, sir, if I could but be assured that you would not be angry with me——

Love. Not at all ; so far from it, you will very much oblige me ; for I am always very glad to hear what the world says of me.

Fas. Well, sir, then since you will have it, I will tell you freely that they make a jest of you everywhere ; nay, of your very servants, upon your account. They make ten thousand stories of you : one says that you have always a quarrel ready with your servants at quarter-day, or when they leave you, in order to find an excuse to give them nothing. Another says that you were taken one night stealing your own oats from your own horses ; for which your coachman very handsomely belaboured your back. In a word, sir, one can go nowhere, where you are not the byword ; you are the laughing-stock of all the world, and you are never mentioned but by the names of covetous, scraping, stingy——

Love. Impertinent, impudent rascal ! Beat him for me, Clermont.

Cler. Are not you ashamed, Mr. James, to give your master this language ?

Fas. What's that to you, sir ? I fancy this fellow's a coward ; if he be I will handle him.

Cler. It does not become a servant to use such language to his master.

Fas. Who taught you, sir, what becomes ? If you trouble your

head with my business, I shall thresh your jacket for you. If I once take a stick in hand, I shall teach you to hold your tongue for the future, I believe. If you offer to say another word to me I'll break your head for you.

[*Drives CLERMONT to the farther end of the stage.*]

Cler. How, rascal ! break my head !

Fas. I did not say I'd break your head.

[*CLERMONT drives him back again.*]

Cler. Do you know, sirrah, that I shall break yours for this impudence ?

Fas. I hope not, sir ! I give you no offence, sir.

Cler. That I shall show you the difference between us.

Fas. Ha, ha, ha ! sir, I was but in jest.

Cler. Then I shall warn you to forbear these jests for the future.

[*Kicks him off the stage.*]

Fas. Nay, sir, can't you take a jest ? Why, I was but in jest all the while.

Love. How happy am I in such a clerk !

Cler. You may leave the ordering of the supper to me, sir ; I will take care of that.

Love. Do so ; see and provide something to cloy their stomachs ; let there be two great dishes of soup-meagre, a good large suet pudding, some dainty fat pork-pie or pasty, a fine small breast of mutton, not too fat ; a salad, and a dish of artichokes ; which will make plenty and variety enough.

Cler. I shall take a particular care, sir, to provide everything to your satisfaction.

Love. But be sure there be plenty of soup ; be sure of that. This is a most excellent young fellow ; but now I will go and pay a visit to my money.

SCENE IV.—*The Street.*

RAMILIE and LAPPET, *meeting.*

Ram. Well, madam, what success ? Have I been a false prophet, and have you come at the old hunc's purse ? or have I spoke like an oracle, and is he as closefisted as usual ?

Lap. Never was a person of my function so used. All my rhetoric availed nothing ; while I was talking to him about the lady, he smiled and was pleased, but the moment I mentioned money to him his countenance changed, and he understood not one word that I said. But now, Ramilie, what do you think this affair is that I am transacting ?

Ram. Nay, Mrs. Lappet, now you are putting too severe a task upon me. How is it possible, in the vast variety of affairs which you honour with taking into your hands, that I should be able to guess which is so happy to employ your immediate thoughts ?

Lap. Let me tell you then, sweet sir, that I am transacting an affair between your master's mistress and his father.

Ram. What affair, prithee?

Lap. What should it be but the old one, matrimony? In short, your master and his father are rivals.

Ram. I'm glad on't, and I wish the old gentleman success with all my heart.

Lap. How! are you your master's enemy?

Ram. No, madam, I am so much his friend, that I had rather he should lose his mistress than his humble servant; which must be the case, for I am determined against a married family. I will never be servant to any man who is not his own master.

Lap. Why, truly, when one considers the case thoroughly, I must be of an opinion that it would be more your master's interest to be this lady's son-in-law than her husband; for, in the first place she has but little fortune, and, if she was once married to his son, I dare swear the old gentleman would never forgive the disappointment of his love.

Ram. And is the old gentleman in love?

Lap. Oh, profoundly! delightfully! Oh that you had but seen him as I have! with his feet tottering, his eyes watering, his teeth chattering! His old trunk was shaken with a fit of love, just as if it had been a fit of an ague.

Ram. He will have more cold fits than hot, I believe.

Lap. Is it not more advantageous for him to have a mother-in-law that should open his father's heart to him than a wife that should shut it against him? Besides, it will be the better for us all; for if the husband were as covetous as the devil, he could not stop the hands of an extravagant wife. She will always have it in her power to reward them who keep her secrets; and when the husband is old enough to be the wife's grandfather, she has always secrets that are worth concealing, take my word for it. So, faith, I will even set about that in earnest which I have hitherto intended only as a jest.

Ram. But do you think you can prevail with her? Will she not be apt to think she loses that by the exchange which he cannot make her amends for?

Lap. Ah! Ramilie! the difficulty is not so great to persuade a woman to follow her interest. We generally have that more at heart than you men imagine; besides, we are extremely apt to listen to one another; and whether you would lead a woman to ruin, or preserve her from it, the surest way of doing either is by one of her own sex. We are generally decoyed into the net by birds of our own feathers.

Ram. Well, if you do succeed in your undertaking, you will allow this, I hope, that I first put it into your head.

Lap. Yes, it is true, you did mention it first; but I thought of it first; I am sure I must have thought of it; but I will not lose a moment's time; for, notwithstanding all I have said, young fellows

are perils. Besides, this has a most plausible tongue, and, should he get access to Mariana, may do in a few minutes what I shall be never able to undo as long as I live.

SCENE V.—LOVEGOLD'S *House*.

LOVEGOLD, FREDERICK, HARRIET, MRS. WISELY, MARIANA.

Love. You see, madam, what it is to marry extremely young. Here are a couple of tall branches for you, almost the age of man and woman ; but ill weeds grow apace.

Mrs. W. When children come to their age, Mr. Lovegold, they are no longer any trouble to their parents ; what I have always dreaded was to have married into a family where there were small children.

Love. Pray give me leave, young lady ; I have been told you have no great aversion to spectacles : it is not that your charms do not sufficiently strike the naked eye, or that they want addition ; but it is with glasses we look at the stars, and I'll maintain you are a star of beauty that is the finest, brightest, and most glorious of all stars.

Mar. Harriet, I shall certainly burst. Oh ! nauseous, filthy fellow !

Love. What does she say to you, Harriet ?

Har. She says, sir, if she were a star, you would be sure of her kindest influence.

Love. How can I return this great honour you do me ?

Mar. Auh ! what an animal ! what a wretch !

Love. How vastly am I obliged to you for these kind sentiments.

Mar. I shall never be able to hold it out unless you keep him at a greater distance.

Love. [*listening.*] I shall make them both keep their distance, madam. Harkee, you Mr. Spendall, why don't you come and make this lady some acknowledgment for the great honour she does your father ?

Fred. My father has indeed, madam, much reason to be vain of his choice. You will be doubtless a very great honour to our family. Notwithstanding which, I cannot dissemble my real sentiments so far as to counterfeit any joy I shall have in the name of son-in-law ; nor can I help saying that, if it were in my power, I believe I should make no scruple of preventing the match.

Mar. I believe it ; indeed, were they to ask the leave of their children, few parents would marry twice.

Love. Why, you ill-bred blockhead, is that the compliment you make your mother-in-law ?

Fred. Well, sir, since you will have me talk in another style—suffer me, madam, to put myself in the place of my father ; and believe me when I swear to you I never saw any one half so charming ; that I can imagine no happiness equal to that of pleasing you ; that to be called your husband would be, to my ears, a title more blessed, more glorious, than that of the greatest of

princes. The possession of you is the most valuable gift in the power of fortune. That is the lovely mark to which all my ambition tends; there is nothing which I am not capable of undertaking to attain so great a blessing; all difficulties, when you are the prize in pursuit——

Love. Hold, hold, sir; softly, if you please.

Fred. I am only saying a few civil things, sir, for you to this lady.

Love. Your humble servant, sir; I have a tongue to say civil things with myself. I have no need of such an interpreter as you are, sweet sir.

Mar. If your father could not speak better for himself than his son can for him, I am afraid he would meet with little success.

Love. I don't ask you, ladies, to drink any wine before supper, lest it should spoil your stomachs.

Fred. I have taken the liberty to order some sweetmeats, sir, and tokay, in the next room; I hope the ladies will excuse what is wanting.

Mrs. W. There was no necessity for such a collation.

Fred. [to MARIANA.] Did you ever see, madam, so fine a brilliant as that on my father's finger?

Mar. It seems, indeed, to be a very fine one.

Fred. You cannot judge of it, madam, unless you were to see it nearer. If you will give me leave, sir.—[takes it off from his father's finger and gives it to MARIANA.] There is no seeing a jewel while it is on the finger.

Mrs. W. and Mar. It is really a prodigious fine one.

Fred. [preventing MARIANA, who is going to return it.] No, madam, it is already in the best hands. My father, madam, intends it as a present to you; therefore I hope you will accept it.

Love. Present! I!

Fred. Is it not, sir, your request to this lady that she would wear this bauble for your sake?

Love. [to his son.] Is the devil in you?

Fred. He makes signs to me that I would entreat you to accept it.

Mar. I shall not, upon my word.

Fred. He will not receive it again.

Love. I shall run stark staring mad.

Mar. I must insist on returning 't.

Fred. It would be cruel in you to refuse him; let me entreat you, madam, not to shock my poor father to such a degree.

Mrs. W. It is ill-breeding, child, to refuse so often.

Love. Oh! that the devil would but fly away with this fellow!

Fred. See, madam, what agonies he is in, lest you should return it. It is not my fault, dear sir; I do all I can to prevail with—— but she is obstinate. For pity's sake, madam, keep it.

Love. [to his son.] Infernal villain!

Fred. My father will never forgive me, madam, unless I succeed; on my knees I entreat you.

Love. The cut-throat !

Mrs. W. Daughter, I protest you make me ashamed of you ; come, come, put up the ring, since Mr. Lovegold is so uneasy about it

Mar. Your commands, madam, always determine me, and I shall refuse no longer.

Love. I shall be undone ; I wish I was buried while I have one farthing left.

SCENE VI.

To them, JAMES.

Jas. Sir, there is a man at the door who desires to speak with you.

Love. Tell him I am busy ; bid him come another time ; bid him leave his business with you.

Jas. Must he leave the money he has brought with him, sir ?

Love. No, no, stay ; tell him I come this instant. I ask pardon, ladies, I'll wait on you again immediately.

Fred. Will you please, ladies, to walk into the next room, and taste the collation I was mentioning ?

Mar. I have eat too much fruit already this afternoon.

Mrs. W. Really, sir, this is an unnecessary trouble ; but, since the tokay is provided, I will taste one glass.

Har. I'll wait on you, madam.

SCENE VII.

FREDERICK, MARIANA.

Mar. That is a mighty pretty picture over the door, Harriet. Is it a family-piece, my dear ? I think it has a great deal of you in it. Are not you generally thought very like it ? Heyday ! where is my mamma and your sister gone ?

Fred. They thought, madam, we might have some business together, and so were willing to leave us alone.

Mar. Did they so ? but as we happen to have no business together we may as well follow them.

Fred. When a lover has no other obstacles to surmount but those his mistress throws in his way, she is in the right not to become too easy a conquest ; but, were you as kind as I could wish, my father would still prove a sufficient bar to our happiness ; therefore it is a double cruelty in you.

Mar. Our happiness ! how came your happiness and mine to depend so on one another, pray, when that of the mother and son-in-law are usually so very opposite ?

Fred. This is keeping up the play behind the curtain. Your kindness to him comes from the same spring as your cruelty to me.

Mar. Modest enough ! then, I suppose, you think both fictitious.

Fred. Faith, to be sincere, I do without arrogance, I think ; I

have nothing in me so detestable as should make you deaf to all I say, or blind to all I suffer. This I am certain, there is nothing in him so charming as to captivate a woman of your sense in a moment.

Mar. You are mistaken, sir ; money, money, the most charming of all things ; money, which will say more in one moment than the most elegant lover can in years. Perhaps you will say a man is not young ; I answer he is rich. He is not genteel, handsome, witty, brave, good-humoured ; but he is rich, rich, rich, rich, rich ; that one word contradicts everything you can say against him ; and if you were to praise a person for a whole hour, and end with, " But he is poor," you overthrow all you have said ; for it has long been an established maxim that he who is rich can have no vice, and he that is poor can have no virtue.

Fred. These principles are foreign to the real sentiments of Mariana's heart. I vow, did you but know how ill a counterfeit you are, how awkwardly ill-nature sits upon you, you'd never wear it. There is not one so abandoned but that she can affect what is amiable better than you can what is odious. Nature has painted in you the complexion of virtue in such lively colours, that nothing but what is lovely can suit you, or appear your own.

SCENE VIII.

MARIANA, FREDERICK, HARRIET.

Har. I left your mamma, Mariana, with Mr. Clermont, who is showing her some pictures in the gallery. Well, have you told him ?

Mar. Told him what ?

Har. Why, what you told me this afternoon ; that you loved him.

Mar. I tell you I loved him !—Oh ! barbarous falsehood !

Fred. Did you ? could you say so ? Oh ! repeat it to my face, and make me blessed to that degree.

Har. Repeat it to him, can't you ? How can you be so ill-natured to conceal anything from another which would make him happy to know ?

Mar. The lie would choke me, were I to say so.

Har. Indeed, my dear, you have said you hated him so often that you need not fear that. But, if she will not discover it to you herself, take my word for it, brother, she is your own without any possibility of losing. She is full as fond of you as you are of her. I hate this peevish, foolish coyness in women, who will suffer a worthy lover to languish and despair, when they need only put themselves to the pain of telling truth to make them easy.

Mar. Give me leave to tell you, Miss Harriet, this is a treatment I did not expect from you, especially in your own house, madam. I did not imagine I was invited hither to be betrayed, and that

you had entered into a plot with your brother against my reputation.

Har. We form a plot against your reputation! I wish you could see, my dear, how prettily these airs become you. Take my word for it, you would have no reason to be in love with your fancy.

Mar. I should indeed have no reason to be in love with my fancy if it were fixed where you have insinuated it to be placed.

Har. If you have any reason, madam, to be ashamed of your choice, it is from denying it. My brother is every way worthy of you, madam; and give me leave to tell you, if I can prevent it, you shall not render him as ridiculous to the town as you have some other of your admirers.

Fred. Dear Harriet, carry it no further; you will ruin me for ever with her.

Har. Away! you do not know the sex. Her vanity will make you play the fool till she despises you, and then contempt will destroy her affection for you—It is a part she has often played.

Mar. I am obliged to you, however, madam, for the lesson you have given me, how far I may depend on a woman's friendship. It will be my own fault if ever I am deceived hereafter.

Har. My friendship, madam, naturally cools when I discover its object less worthy than I imagined her. I can never have any violent esteem for one who would make herself unhappy to make the person who dotes on her more so; the ridiculous custom of the world is a poor excuse for such a behaviour. And, in my opinion, the coquette, who sacrifices the ease and reputation of as many as she is able to an ill-natured vanity, is a more odious—I am sure she is a more pernicious creature—than the wretch whom fondness betrays to make her lover happy at the expense of her own reputation.

SCENE IX.

To them, MRS. WISELY, CLERMONT.

Mrs. W. Upon my word, sir, you have a most excellent taste for pictures.

Mar. I can bear this no longer; if you have been base enough to have given up all friendship and honour, good breeding should have restrained you from using me after this inhuman, cruel, barbarous manner.

Mrs. W. Bless me, child, what's the matter.

Har. Let me entreat you, Mariana, not to expose yourself; you have nothing to complain of on his side; and therefore pray let the whole be a secret.

Mar. A secret! no, madam. The whole world shall know how I have been treated. I thank Heaven I have it in my power to be revenged on you; and if I am not revenged on you—

Fred. See, sister, was I not in the right? Did I not tell you you would ruin me? and now you have done it.

Har. Courage! all will go well yet. You must not be frightened at a few storms. These are only blasts that carry a lover to his harbour.

SCENE X.

To them, LOVEGOLD.

Love. I ask you pardon; I have despatched my business with all possible haste.

Mrs. W. I did not expect, Mr. Lovegold, when we were invited hither, that your children intended to affront us.

Love. Has any one affronted you, madam?

Mrs. W. Your children, sir, have used my poor girl so ill, that they have brought tears into her eyes. I can assure you we are not used to be treated in this manner. My daughter is of as good a family——

Love. Out of my sight, audacious, vile wretches! and let me never see you again.

Fred. Sir, I——

Love. I won't hear a word, and I wish I may never hear you more. Was ever such impudence, to dare, after what I have told you——

Har. Come, brother; perhaps I may give you some comfort.

Fred. I fear you have destroyed it for ever.

SCENE XI.

LOVEGOLD, MRS. WISELY, MARIANA, CLERMONT.

Love. How shall I make you amends for the rudeness you have suffered? Poor, pretty creature! had they stolen my purse, I would almost as soon have pardoned them.

Mrs. W. The age is come to a fine pass, indeed, if children are to control the wills of their parents. If I would have consented to a second match, I would have been glad to have seen a child of mine oppose it.

Love. Let us be married immediately, my dear; and if after that they ever dare to offend you, they shall stay no longer under my roof.

Mrs. W. Lookee, Mariana; I know your consent will appear a little sudden, and not altogether conform to those nice rules of decorum of which I have been all my life so strict an observer; but this is so prudent a match, that the world will be apt to give you a dispensation. When women seem too forward to run away with idle young fellows, the world is, as it ought to be, very severe on them; but when they only consult their interest in their consent, though it be never so quickly given, we say, La! who suspected it? it was mighty privately carried on.

Mar. I resign myself entirely over to your will, madam, and am at your disposal.

Mrs. W. Mr. Lovegold, my daughter is a little shy on this occasion ; you know your courtship has not been of any long date ; but she has considered your great merit, and I believe I may venture to give you her consent.

Love. And shall I ? hey ? I begin to find myself the happiest man upon earth. Od, madam, you shall be a grandmother within these ten months. I am a very young fellow.

Mar. If you were five years younger I should utterly detest you.

Love. The very creature she was described to be. No one, sure, ever so luckily found a mass of treasure as I have. My pretty sweet, if you will walk a few minutes in the garden I will wait on you. I must give some necessary orders to my clerk.

Mrs. W. We shall expect you with impatience.

SCENE XII.

LOVEGOLD, CLERMONT.

Love. Clermont, come hither. You see the disorder my house is likely to be in this evening. I must trust everything to your care. See that matters be managed with as small expense as possible. My extravagant son has sent for fruit, sweetmeats, and tokay. Take care what is not eat or drank be returned to the tradespeople. If you can save a bottle of the wine, let that be sent back too, and put up what is left ; if part of a bottle, in a pint : that I will keep for my own drinking when I am sick. Be sure that the servants of my guests be not asked to come further than the hall, for fear some of mine should ask them to eat. I trust everything to you.

Cler. I shall take all the care possible, sir. But there is one thing in this entertainment of yours which gives me inexpressible pain.

Love. What is that, prithee ?

Cler. That is the cause of it. Give me leave, sir, to be free on this occasion. I am sorry a man of your years and prudence should be prevailed on to so indiscreet an action as I fear this marriage will be called.

Love. I know she has not quite so great a fortune as I might expect.

Cler. Has she any fortune, sir ?

Love. Oh ! yes, yes, I have been very well assured that her mother is in very good circumstances ; and you know she is her only daughter. Besides, she has several qualities which will save a fortune ; and a penny saved is a penny got. Since I find I have great occasion for a wife, I might have searched all over this town and not have got one cheaper.

Cler. Sure, you are in a dream, sir ; she save a fortune !

Love. In the article of a table at least two hundred pounds a year.

Cler. Sure, sir, you do not know——

Love. In clothes two hundred more.

Cler. There is not, sir, in the whole town——

Love. In jewels, one hundred; play, five hundred; these have been all proved to me; besides all that her mother is worth. In short, I have made a very prudent choice.

Cler. Do but hear me, sir.

Love. Take a particular care of the family, my good boy. Pray, let there be nothing wasted.

SCENE XIII.

CLERMONT, *alone.*

How vainly do we spend our breath while passion shuts the ears of those we talk to! I thought it impossible for anything to have surmounted his avarice, but I find there is one little passion which reigns triumphant in every mind it creeps into; and whether a man be covetous, proud, or cowardly, it is in the power of woman to make him liberal, humble, and brave. Sure this young lady will not let her fury carry her into the arms of a wretch she despises; but, as she is a coquette, there is no answering for any of her actions. I will hasten to acquaint Frederick with what I have heard. Poor man! how little satisfaction he finds in his mistress compared to what I meet in Harriet! Love to him is misery; to me perfect happiness. Women are always one or the other; they are never indifferent.

Whoever takes for better and for worse
Meets with the greatest blessing or the greatest curse.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in LOVEGOLD'S House.*

FREDERICK, RAMILIE.

Fred. How! Lappet my enemy! and can she attempt to forward Mariana's marriage with my father?

Ram. Sir, upon my honour it is true. She told it me in the highest confidence—a trust, sir, which nothing but the inviolable friendship I have for you could have prevailed with me to have broken.

Fred. Sir, I am your most humble servant; I am infinitely obliged to your friendship.

Ram. Oh! sir; but really I did withstand pretty considerable offers; for, would you think it, sir? the jade had the impudence to attempt to engage me too in the affair. I believe, sir, you would have been pleased to have heard the answer I gave her. Madam, says I, do you think, if I had no more honour, I should have no

greater regard to my interest? It is my interest, madam, says I, to be honest; for my master is a man of that generosity, that liberality, that bounty, that I am sure he will never suffer any servant of his to be a loser by being true to him. No, no, says I, let him alone for rewarding a servant when he is but once assured of his fidelity.

Fred. No demands now, Ramilie; I shall find a time to reward you.

Ram. That was what I told her, sir. Do you think, says I, this old rascal (I ask your pardon, sir), that this hunk, my master's father, will live for ever?—and then, says I, do you think my master will not remember his old friends?

Fred. Well, but, dear sir, let us have no more of your rhetoric—go and fetch Lappet hither. I'll try if I can't bring her over.

Ram. Bring her over! a fig for her, sir! I have a plot worth fifty of yours. I'll blow her up with your father. I'll make him believe just the contrary of every word she has told him.

Fred. Can you do that?

Ram. Never fear it, sir; I'll warrant my lies keep even pace with hers. But, sir, I have another plot; I don't question but before you sleep I shall put you in possession of some thousands of your father's money.

Fred. He has done all in his power to provoke me to it; but I am afraid that will be carrying the jest too far.

Ram. Sir, I will undertake to make it out that robbing him is a downright meritorious act. Besides, sir, if you have any qualms of conscience, you may return it him again. Your having possession of it will bring him to any terms.

Fred. Well, well. I believe there is little danger of thy stealing anything from him. So about the first affair. It is that only which causes my present pain.

Ram. Fear nothing, sir, whilst Ramilie is your friend.

SCENE II.

FREDERICK, CLERMONT.

Fred. If impudence can give a title to success, I am sure thou hast a good one.

Cler. Oh! Frederick, I have been looking for you all over the house. I have news for you, which will give me pain to discover, though it is necessary you should know it. In short, Mariana has determined to marry your father this evening.

Fred. How! Oh, Clermont! is it possible? woe be to the politics of my sister; she is the innocent occasion of this. And can Mariana from a pique to her throw herself away? Dear Clermont, give me some advice; think on some method by which I may prevent, at least defer, this match; for that moment which gives her to my father will strike a thousand daggers in my heart.

Cler. Would I could advise you ; but here comes one who is more likely to invent some means for your deliverance.

Fred. Ha ! Lappet !

SCENE III.

LAPPET, FREDERICK, CLERMONT.

Lap. Heyday ! Mr. Frederick, you stand with your arms across, and look as melancholy as if there was a funeral going on in the house, instead of a wedding.

Fred. This wedding, madam, will prove the occasion of my funeral ; I am obliged to you for being instrumental to it.

Lap. Why, truly, if you consider the case rightly, I think you are. It will be much more to your interest to——

Fred. Mistress, undo immediately what you have done ; prevent this match which you have forwarded, or by all the devils which inhabit that heart of yours——

Lap. For Heaven's sake, sir, you do not intend to kill me ?

Fred. What could drive your villainy to attempt to rob me of the woman I dote on more than life ? What could urge thee, when I trusted thee with my passion, when I have paid the most extravagant usury for money to bribe thee to be my friend, what could sway thee to betray me ?

Lap. As I hope to be saved, sir, whatever I have done was intended for your service.

Fred. It is in vain to deny it ; I know thou hast used thy utmost art to persuade my father into this match.

Lap. If I did, sir, it was all with a view towards your interest ; if I have done anything to prevent your having her, it was because I thought you would do better without her.

Fred. Would'st thou, to save my life, tear out my heart ? And dost thou, like an impudent inquisitor, while thou art destroying me, assert it is for my own sake ?

Lap. Be but appeased, sir, and let me recover out of this terrible fright you have put me into, and I will engage to make you easy yet.

Cler. Dear Frederick, adjourn your anger for a while at least ; I am sure Mrs. Lappet is not your enemy in her heart ; and whatever she has done, if it has not been for your sake, this I dare confidently affirm, it has been for her own. And I have so good an opinion of her, that, the moment you show her it will be more her interest to serve you than to oppose you, you may be secure of her friendship.

Fred. But has she not already carried it beyond retrieval ?

Lap. Alas ! sir, I never did anything yet so effectually, but that I have been capable of undoing it ; nor have I ever said anything so positively, but that I have been able as positively to unsay it again. As for truth, I have neglected it so long, that I often forget which side of the question it is of. Besides, I look on it to be so

very insignificant towards success, that I am indifferent whether it is for me or against me.

Fred. Let me entreat you, dear madam, to lose no time in informing us of your many excellent qualities, but consider how very precious our time is, since the marriage is intended this very evening.

Lap. That cannot be.

Cler. My own ears were witnesses to her consent.

Lap. That indeed may be—but for the marriage it cannot be, nor it shall not be.

Fred. How! how will you prevent it!

Lap. By an infallible rule I have. But, sir, Mr. Clermont was mentioning a certain little word called interest, just now. I should not repeat it to you, sir, but that really one goes about a thing with so much a better will, and one has so much better luck in it too, when one has got some little matter by it.

Fred. Here, take all the money I have in my pocket, and on my marriage with Mariana thou shalt have fifty more.

Lap. That is enough, sir; if they were half married already I would unmarry them again. I am impatient till I am about it. Oh! there is nothing like gold to quicken a woman's capacity.

SCENE IV.

FREDERICK, CLERMONT.

Fred. Dost thou think I may place any confidence in what this woman says?

Cler. Faith! I think so. I have told you how dexterously she managed my affairs. I have seen such proofs of her capacity, that I am much easier on your account than I was.

Fred. My own heart is something lighter too. Oh, Clermont! how dearly do we buy all the joys which we receive from women!

Cler. A coquette's lover generally pays very severely indeed. His game is sure to lead him a long chase, and if he catches her at last she is hardly worth carrying home.—You will excuse me.

Fred. It does not affect me; for what appears a coquette in Mariana, is rather the effects of sprightliness and youth than any fixed habit of mind; she has good sense and good nature at the bottom.

Cler. If she has good nature, it is at the bottom indeed; for I think she has never discovered any to you.

Fred. Women of her beauty and merit have such a variety of admirers, that they are shocked to think of giving up all the rest by fixing on one. Besides, so many pretty gentlemen are continually attending them, and whispering soft things in their ears, who think all their services well repaid by a curtesy or a smile, that they are startled, and think a lover a most unreasonable creature who can imagine he merits their whole person.

Cler. They are of all people my aversion. They are a sort of

spaniels, who, though they have no chance of running down the hare themselves, often spoil the chase : it is pleasant enough to see them watching the eyes of a woman of quality half an hour to get an opportunity of making a bow to her.

Fred. Which she often returns with a smile, or some other extraordinary mark of affection, from a charitable design of giving pain to her real admirer, who, though he can't be jealous of the animal, is concerned to see her condescend to take notice of him.

SCENE V.

HARRIET, FREDERICK, CLERMONT.

Har. I suppose, brother, you have heard of my good father's economy, that he has resolved to join two entertainments in one, and prevent giving an extraordinary wedding-supper.

Fred. Yes, I have heard it—and I hope have taken measures to prevent it.

Har. Why, did you believe it then ?

Fred. I think I had no longer room to doubt.

Har. Heaven forbid I should have such a mother-in-law ! But I think, if she were wedded into any other family, you would have no reason to lament the loss of so constant a mistress.

Fred. Dear Harriet, indulge my weakness.

Har. I will indulge your weakness with all my heart, but the men ought not ; for they are such lovers as you, who spoil the women. Come, if you will bring Mr. Clermont into my apartment, I'll give you a dish of tea, and you shall have some *sal volatile* in it, though you have no real cause for any depression of your spirit ; for I dare swear your mistress is very safe. And I am sure, if she were to be lost in the manner you apprehend, she would be the best loss you ever had in your life.

Cler. Oh, Frederick ! if your mistress were but equal to your sister, you might be well called the happiest of mankind.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

MARIANA, LAPPET.

Lap. Ha, ha, ha ! and so you have persuaded the old lady that you really intend to have him.

Mar. I tell you I do really intend to have him.

Lap. Have him ! ha, ha, ha ! For what do you intend to have him ?

Mar. Have I not told you already that I will marry him ?

Lap. Indeed, you will not.

Mar. How, Mrs. Impertinence ! has your mistress told you so ? and did she send you hither to persuade me against the match ?

Lap. What should you marry him for ? As for his riches, you

might as well think of going hungry to a fine entertainment, where you are sure of not being suffered to eat. The very income of your own fortune will be more than he will allow you. Adieu fine clothes, operas, plays, assemblies ; adieu dear quadrille ! And to what have you sacrificed all these ? Not to a husband—for whatever you make of him, you will never make a husband of him, I'm sure.

Mar. This is a liberty, madam, I shall not allow you ; if you intend to stay in this house you must leave off these pretty airs you have lately given yourself. Remember you are a servant here, and not the mistress, as you have been suffered to affect.

Lap. You may lay aside your airs too, good madam, if you come to that ; for I shall not desire to stay in this house when you are the mistress of it.

Mar. It will be prudent in you not to put on your usual insolence to me ; for, if you do, your master shall punish you for it.

Lap. I have one comfort, he will not be able to punish me half so much as he will you. The worst he can do to me is to turn me out of the house—but you he can keep in it. Wife to an old fellow ! laugh !

Mar. If Miss Harriet sent you on this errand you may return, and tell her her wit is shallower than I imagined it ; and since she has no more experience, I believe I shall send my daughter-in-law to school again. [Exit.]

Lap. Hum ! you will have a schoolmaster at home. I begin to doubt whether this sweet-tempered creature will not marry in spite at last. I have one project more to prevent her, and that I will about instantly.

SCENE VII.—*The Garden.*

LOVEGOLD, MRS. WISELY.

Love. I cannot be easy. I must settle something upon her.

Mrs. W. Believe me, Mr. Lovegold, it is unnecessary ; when you die you will leave your wife very well provided for.

Love. Indeed, I have known several lawsuits happen on these accounts ; and sometimes the whole has been thrown away in disputing to which party it belonged. I shall not sleep in my grave while a set of villainous lawyers are dividing the little money I have among them.

Mrs. W. I know this old fool is fond enough now to come to any terms ; but it is ill trusting him : violent passions can never last long at his years. [Aside.]

Love. What are you considering ?

Mrs. W. Mr. Lovegold, I am sure, knows the world too well to have the worse opinion of any woman from her prudence : therefore, I must tell you, this delay of the match does not at all please me. It seems to argue your inclinations abated, and so it is better to let the treaty end here. My daughter has a very good offer now,

which were she to refuse on your account, she would make a very ridiculous figure in the world after you had left her.

Love. Alas ! madam, I love her better than anything almost upon the face of the earth ; this delay is to secure her a good jointure : I am not worth the money the world says ; I am not, indeed.

Mrs. W. Well, sir, then there can be no harm, for the satisfaction of both her mind and mine, in your signing a small contract, which can be prepared immediately.

Love. What signifies signing, madam ?

Mrs. W. I see, sir, you don't care for it. So there is no harm done ; and really this other is so very advantageous an offer, that I don't know whether I shall not be blamed for refusing him on any account.

Love. Nay, but be not in haste ; what would you have me sign ?

Mrs. W. Only to perform your promise of marriage.

Love. Well, well, let your lawyer draw it up then, and mine shall look over it.

Mrs. W. I believe my lawyer is in the house ; I'll go to him, and get it done instantly ; and then we will give this gentleman a final answer. I assure you he is a very advantageous offer. [*Exit.*]

Love. As I intend to marry this girl, there can be no harm in signing the contract ; her lawyer draws it up, so I shall be at no expense ; for I can get mine to look it over for nothing. I should have done very wisely indeed to have entitled her to a third of my fortune—whereas I will not make her jointure above a tenth. I protest it is with some difficulty that I have prevailed with myself to put off the match. I am more in love, I find, than I suspected.

SCENE VIII.

LAPPET, LOVEGOLD.

Lapp. Oh ! unhappy, miserable creature that I am ! What shall I do ?—whither shall I go ?

Love. What's the matter, Lappet ?

Lapp. To have been innocently assisting in betraying so good a man ! so good a master ! so good a friend !

Love. Lappet, I say !

Lapp. I shall never forgive myself ; I shall never outlive it ; I shall never eat, drink, sleep— [*Runs against him.*]

Love. One would think you were walking in your sleep now. What can be the meaning of this ?

Lapp. Oh, sir !—you are undone, sir ; and I am undone.

Love. How !—what !—has any one robbed me ? Have I lost anything ?

Lapp. No, sir ; but you have got something.

Love. What ? what ?

Lapp. A wife, sir.

Love. No, I have not yet. But why—

Lap. How, sir! are you not married?

Love. No.

Lap. That is the happiest word I ever heard come out of your mouth.

Love. I have, for some particular reasons, put off the match for a few days.

Lap. Yes, sir; and, for some particular reasons, you shall put off the match for a few years.

Love. What do you say?

Lap. Oh, sir! this affair has almost determined me never to engage in matrimonial matters again. I have been finely deceived in this lady. I told you, sir, she had an estate in a certain country; but I find it is all a cheat, sir.

Love. How! not any estate at all! How can she live, then?

Lap. Nay, sir, Heaven knows how half the people in this town live.

Love. However, it is an excellent good quality in a woman to be able to live without an estate. She that can make something out of nothing will make a little go a great way. I am sorry she has no fortune; but, considering all her saving qualities, Lappet—

Lap. All an imposition, sir. She is the most extravagant wretch upon earth.

Love. How! how! Extravagant?

Lap. I tell you, sir, she is downright extravagance itself.

Love. Can it be possible, after what you told me?

Lap. Alas, sir! that was only a cloak thrown over her real inclinations.

Love. How was it possible for you to be so deceived in her?

Lap. Alas, sir! she would have deceived any one upon earth, even you yourself; for, sir, during a whole fortnight since you have been in love with her, she has made it her whole business to conceal her extravagance, and appear thrifty.

Love. That is a good sign, though—Lappet, let me tell you, that is a good sign. Right habits, as well as wrong, are got by affecting them. And she who could be thrifty a whole fortnight gives lively hopes that she may be brought to be so as long as she lives.

Lap. She loves play to distraction. It is the only visible way in the world she has of living.

Love. She must win, then, Lappet; and play, when people play the best of the game, is no such very bad thing. Besides, as she plays only to support herself, when she can be supported without it she may leave it off.

Lap. To support her extravagance, in dress particularly. Why, don't you see, sir, she's dressed out to-day like a princess.

Love. It may be an effect of prudence in a young woman to dress, in order to get a husband. And, as that is apparently her motive, when she is married that motive ceases; and, to say the truth, she is in discourse a very prudent young woman.

Lap. Think of her extravagance.

Love. A woman of the greatest modesty !

Lap. And extravagance.

Love. She has really a very fine set of teeth.

Lap. She will have all the teeth out of your head.

Love. I never saw finer eyes.

Lap. She will eat you out of house and home.

Love. Charming hair.

Lap. She will ruin you.

Love. Sweet kissing lips, and the finest shape that ever was embraced.

Lap. Oh, sir, I am not the lady.—[*Catching LAPPEE in his arms.*—Was ever such an old goat !—Well, sir, I see you are determined on the match ; and so I desire you would pay me my wages. I cannot bear to see the ruin of a family in which I have lived so long that I have contracted a great a friendship for it as if it was my own. I can't bear to see waste, riot, and extravagance ; to see all the wealth a poor, honest, industrious gentleman has been raising all his lifetime squandered away in a year or two in feasts, balls, music, cards, clothes, jewels. It would break my heart to see my poor old master eat out by a set of singers, fiddlers, milliners, mantua-makers, mercers, toymen, jewellers, fops, cheats, rakes. To see his guineas fly about like dust ; all his ready money paid in one morning to one tradesman ; his whole stock in the Funds spent in one half-year ; all his land swallowed down in another ; all his old gold—nay, the very plate which he has had in his family time out of mind—which has descended from father to son ever since the Flood—to see even that disposed of. What will they have next, I wonder, when they have had all that he is worth in the world, and left the poor old man without anything to furnish his old age with the necessaries of life—will they be contented then, or will they tear out his bowels, and eat them too?—[*Both burst into tears.*]. The laws are cruel to put it in the power of a wife to ruin her husband in this manner. And will any one tell me that such a woman as this is handsome ? What are a pair of shining eyes, when they must be bought with the loss of all one's shining gold ?

Love. Oh ! my poor old gold.

Lap. Perhaps she has a fine set of teeth.

Love. My poor plate, that I have hoarded with so much care !

Lap. Or I'll grant she may have a most beautiful shape.

Love. My dear land and tenements.

Lap. What are the roses on her cheeks, or lilies in her neck ?

Love. My poor Indian bonds, bearing at least three and half per cent.

Lap. A fine excuse, indeed, when a man is ruined by his wife, to tell us he has married a beauty !

SCENE IX.

LAWYER, LOVEGOLD, LAPPET.

Law. Sir, the contract is ready ; my client has sent for the counsel on the other side, and he is now below examining it.

Love. Get you out of my doors, you villain, you and your client too ; I'll contract you, with a vengeance.

Law. Hey-day ! sure you are *non compos mentis* !

Love. No, sirrah, I had like to have been *non compos mentis* ; but I have had the good luck to escape it. Go and tell your client I have discovered her : bid her take her advantageous offer ; for I shall sign no contracts.

Law. This is the strangest thing I have met with in my whole course of practice.

Love. I am very much obliged to you, Lappet ; indeed, I am very much obliged to you.

Lap. I am sure, sir, I have a very great satisfaction in serving you, and I hope you will consider of that little affair that I mentioned to you to-day about my lawsuit.

Love. I am very much obliged to you.

Lap. I hope, sir, you won't suffer me to be ruined when I have preserved you from it.

Love. Hey ! [*Appearing deaf.*]

Lap. You know, sir, that in Westminster Hall money and right are always on the same side.

Love. Ay, so they are ; very true ; so they are ; and therefore, no one can take too much care of his money.

Lap. The smallest matter of money, sir, would do me an infinite service.

Love. Hey ! what ?

Lap. A small matter of money, sir, would do me a great kindness.

Love. Oho ! I have a very great kindness for you ; indeed, I have a very great kindness for you.

Lap. Deuce take your kindness ! I'm only losing time : there's nothing to be got out of him. So I'll even to Frederick, and see what the report of my success will do there. Ah ! would I were married to thee myself !

Love. What a prodigious escape have I had ! I cannot look at the precipice without being giddy.

SCENE X.

RAMILIE, LOVEGOLD.

Love. Who is that ? Oh, is it you, sirrah ? How dare you enter within these walls ?

Ram. Truly, sir, I can scarcely reconcile it to myself ; I think, after what has happened, you have no great title to my friendship.

But I don't know how it is, sir, there is something or other about you which strangely engages my affections, and which, together with the friendship I have for your son, won't let me suffer you to be imposed upon; and to prevent that, sir, is the whole and sole occasion of my coming within your doors. Did not a certain lady, sir, called Mrs. Lappet, depart from you just now?

Love. What if she did, sirrah?

Ram. Has she not, sir, been talking to you about a young lady whose name is Mariana?

Love. Well, and what then?

Ram. Why, then, sir, every single syllable she has told you has been neither more nor less than a most confounded lie; as is, indeed, every word she says; for I don't believe, upon a modest calculation, she has told six truths since she has been in the house. She is made up of lies; her father was an attorney, and her mother was chambermaid to a maid of honour. The first word she spoke was a lie, and so will be the last. I know she has pretended a great affection for you, that's one lie; and everything she has said of Mariana is another.

Love. How! how! are you sure of this?

Ram. Why, sir, she and I laid the plot together; that one time, indeed, I myself was forced to deviate a little from the truth; but it was with a good design; the jade pretended to me that it was out of friendship to my master; that it was because she thought such a match would not be at all to his interest; but, alas! sir, I know her friendship begins and ends at home, and that she has friendship for no person living but herself. Why, sir, do but look at Mariana, sir, and see whether you can think her such a sort of woman as she has described her to you.

Love. Indeed, she has appeared to me always in a different light. I do believe what you say. This jade has been bribed by my children to impose upon me. I forgive thee all that thou hast done for this one service. I will go deny all that I said to the lawyer, and put an end to everything this moment. I knew it was impossible she could be such a sort of a woman. [*Exit.*]

Ram. And I will go find out my master, make him the happiest of mankind, squeeze his purse, and then get drunk for the honour of all party-coloured politicians.

SCENE XI.

The Hall.—FREDERICK, LAPPET.

Fred. Excellent Lappet! I shall never think I have sufficiently rewarded you for what you have done.

Lap. I have only done half the business yet. I have, I believe, effectually broke off the match with your father. Now, sir, I shall make up the matter between you and her.

Fred. Do but that, dear girl, and I'll coin myself into guineas.

Lap. Keep yourself for your lady, sir; she will take all that sort

of coin, I warrant her : as for me, I shall be much more easily contented.

Fred. But what hopes canst thou have ; for I, alas ! see none.

Lap. Oh, sir ! it is more easy to make half a dozen matches than to break one, and, to say the truth, it is an office I myself like better. There is something, methinks, so pretty in bringing young people together that are fond of one another. I protest, sir, you will be a mighty handsome couple. How fond will you be of a little girl the exact picture of her mother ! and how fond will she be of a boy to put her in mind of his father !

Fred. Death ! you jade, you have fired my imagination.

Lap. But, methinks, I want to have the hurricane begin, hugely ; I am surprised they are not altogether by the ears already !

SCENE XII.

RAMILIE, FREDERICK, LAPPET.

Ram. Oh ! madam, I little expected to have found you and my master together, after what has happened ; I did not think you had the assurance—

Fred. Peace, Ramilie, all is well, and Lappet is the best friend I have in the world.

Ram. Yes, sir, all is well, indeed—no thanks to her ; happy is the master that has a good servant—a good servant is certainly the
→ greatest treasure in this world. I have done your business for you, sir ; I have frustrated all she has been doing, denied all she has been telling him—in short, sir, I observed her ladyship in a long conference with the old gentleman, mightily to your interest, as you may imagine. No sooner was she gone, than I steps in and made the old gentleman believe every single syllable she had told him to be a most confounded lie ; and away he is gone, fully determined to put an end to the affair.

Lap. And sign the contract ; so now, sir, you are ruined without reprieve.

Fred. Out on you, ass ! fool ! villain !

Ram. Heyday ! what is the meaning of this ?—have I done any more than you commanded me ?

Fred. Nothing but my ill stars could have contrived so cruel an accident.

Ram. You cannot blame me, sir, whatever has happened.

Fred. I don't blame you, sir, nor myself, nor any one ; fortune has marked me out for misery. But I will be no longer idle : since I am to be ruined, I will meet my destruction.

SCENE XIII.

LAPPET, RAMILIE.

[*They stand some time silent, looking at each other.*]

Lap. I give you joy, sir, of the success of your negotiation ; you

have approved yourself a most able person, truly ; and I dare swear, when your skill is once known, will not want employment.

Ram. Do not triumph, good Mrs. Lappet ; a politician may make a blunder ; I am sure no one can avoid it that is employed with you, for you change sides so often that 'tis impossible to tell at any time which side you are on.

Lap. And pray, sirrah, what was the occasion of your betraying me to your master, for he has told me all ?

Ram. Conscience, conscience, Mrs. Lappet, the great guide of all my actions ; I could not find in my heart to let him lose his mistress.

Lap. Your master is very much obliged to you, indeed, to lose your own in order to preserve his ; for henceforth I forbid all your addresses, I disown all obligations, I revoke all promises : henceforth I would advise you never to open your lips to me, for if you do, it will be in vain ; I shall be deaf to all your little, false, mean, treacherous, base insinuations. I would have you know, sir, a woman injured as I am never can nor ought to forgive. Never see my face again. *[Exit.]*

Ram. Huh ! now would some lovers think themselves very unhappy ; but I, who have had experience in the sex, am never frightened at the frowns of a mistress, nor ravished with her smiles ; they both naturally succeed one another, and a woman, generally, is as sure to perform what she threatens as she is what she promises. But now I'll to my lurking-place. I'm sure this old rogue has money hid in the garden ; if I can but discover it, I shall handsomely quit all scores with the old gentleman, and make my master a sufficient return for the loss of his mistress.

SCENE XIV.

Another Apartment.—FREDERICK, MRS. WISELY, MARIANA.

Fred. No, madam, I have no words to upbraid you with, nor shall I attempt it.

Mrs. W. I think, sir, a respect to your father should keep you now within the rules of decency ; as for my daughter, after what has happened, I think she cannot expect it on any other account.

Mar. Dear mamma, don't be serious, when I dare say Mr. Frederick is in jest.

Fred. This exceeds all you have done ; to insult the person you have made miserable is more cruel than having made him so.

Mar. Come, come, you may not be so miserable as you expect. I know the word mother-in-law has a terrible sound, but perhaps I may make a better than you imagine. Believe me, you will see a change in this house which will not be disagreeable to a man of Mr. Frederick's gay temper.

Fred. All changes to me are henceforth equal. When Fortune robbed me of you, she made her utmost effort ; I now despise all in her power.

Mrs. W. I must insist, sir, on your behaving in a different manner to my daughter. The world is apt to be censorious. Oh, heavens! I shudder at the apprehensions of having a reflection cast on my family, which has hitherto past unblemished.

Fred. I shall take care, madam, to shun any possibility of giving you such a fear; for from this night I never will behold those dear, those fatal eyes again.

Mar. Nay, that I am sure will cast a reflection on me. What a person will the world think me to be, when you could not live with me!

Fred. Live with you! Oh, Mariana! those words bring back a thousand tender ideas to my mind. Oh! had that been my blest fortune!

Mrs. W. Let me beg, sir, you would keep a greater distance. The young fellows of this age are so rampant, that even degrees of kindred can't restrain them.

Fred. There are yet no such degrees between us. Oh, Mariana! while it is in your power, while the irrevocable wax remains unstamped, consider, and do not seal my ruin.

Mrs. W. Come with me, daughter; you shall not stay a moment longer with him—a rude fellow.

SCENE XV.

RAMILIE, FREDERICK.

Ram. Follow me, sir; follow me this instant.

Fred. What's the matter?

Ram. Follow me, sir; we are in the right box; the business is done.

Fred. What done?

Ram. I have it under my arm, sir,—here it is!

Fred. What? what?

Ram. Your father's soul, sir; his money. Follow me, sir, this moment, before we are overtaken.

Fred. Ha! this may preserve me yet.

SCENE XVI.

Love. [*in the utmost distraction.*] Thieves! thieves! assassination! murder! I am undone! all my money is gone! Who is the thief? where is the villain? where shall I find him? Give me my money again, villain.—[*Catching himself by the arm.*] I am distracted! I know not where I am, nor what I am, nor what I do. Oh! my money, my money! Ha! what say you? Alack-a-day! here is no one. The villain must have watched his time carefully; he must have done it while I was signing that vile contract. I will go to a justice, and have all my house put to their oaths, my servants, my children, my mistress, and myself too; all the people in the house, and in the street, and in the town: I will have them all

executed ; I will hang all the world ; and if I don't find my money I will hang myself afterwards.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Hall.—Several SERVANTS.

Fas. There will be rare doings now ; madam's an excellent woman, faith ! Things won't go as they have done ; she has ordered something like a supper ; here will be victuals enough for the whole town.

Tho. She's a sweet-humoured lady, I can tell you that. I have had a very good place on't with her. You will have no more use for locks and keys in this house now.

Fas. This is the luckiest day I ever saw ; as soon as supper is over I will get drunk to her good health, I am resolved ; and that's more than ever I could have done before.

Tho. You shan't want liquor, for here are ten hogsheads of strong beer coming in.

Fas. Bless her heart ! good lady ! I wish she had a better bridegroom.

Tho. Ah ! never mind that, he has a good purse ; and for other things let her alone, master James.

Whe. Thomas, you must go to Mr. Mixture's, the wine-merchant, and order him to send in twelve dozen of his best champagne, twelve dozen of burgundy, and twelve dozen of hermitage ; and you must call at the wax-chandler's and bid him send in a chest of candles ; and at Mr. Lambert's, the confectioner in Pall Mall, and order the finest dessert he can furnish ; and you, Will, must go to Mr. Grey's, the horse-jockey, and order him to buy my lady three of the finest geldings for her coach to-morrow morning ; and, here, you must take this roll, and invite all the people in it to supper ; then you must go to the playhouse in Drury Lane, and engage all the music, for my lady intends to have a ball.

Fas. Oh brave, Mrs. Wheedle ! here are fine times !

Whe. My lady desires that supper may be kept back as much as possible ; and if you can think of anything to add to it, she desires you would.

Fas. She is the best of ladies.

Whe. So you will say when you know her better ; she has thought of nothing ever since matters have been made up between her and your master but how to lay out as much money as she could ; we shall have all rare places.

Fas. I thought to have given warning to-morrow morning, but I believe I shall not be in haste now.

Whe. See what it is to have a woman at the head of a house.

But here she comes. Go you into the kitchen, and see that all things be in the nicest order.

Jas. I am ready to leap out of my skin for joy.

SCENE II.

MARIANA, WHEEDLE, UPHOLSTERER, MRS. WISELY.

Mar. Wheedle, have you despatched the servants according to my orders?

Whe. Yes, madam.

Mar. You will take care, Mr. Furnish, and let me have those two beds with the utmost expedition?

Uphol. I shall take a particular care, madam. I shall put them both in hand to-morrow morning; I shall put off some work, madam, on that account.

Mar. That tapestry in the dining-room does not at all please me.

Uphol. Your ladyship is very much in the right, madam; it is quite out of fashion; no one hangs a room now with tapestry.

Mar. Oh! I have the greatest fondness for tapestry in the world! you must positively get me some of a newer pattern.

Uphol. Truly, madam, as you say, tapestry is one of the prettiest sorts of furniture for a room that I know of. I believe I can show you some that will please you.

Mrs. W. I protest, child, I can't see any reason for this alteration.

Mar. Dear mamma, let me have my will. There is not one thing in the whole house that I shall be able to leave in it, everything has so much of antiquity about it; and I cannot endure the sight of anything that is not perfectly modern.

Uphol. Your ladyship is in the right, madam; there is no possibility of being in the fashion without new furnishing a house at least once in twenty years; and, indeed, to be at the very top of the fashion, you will have need of almost continual alterations.

Mrs. W. That is an extravagance I would never submit to. I have no notion of destroying one's goods before they are half worn out, by following the ridiculous whims of two or three people of quality.

Uphol. Ha! ha! madam, I believe her ladyship is of a different opinion. I have many a set of goods entirely whole, that I would be very loath to put into your hands.

SCENE III.

To them, MERCER, JEWELLER.

Mar. Oh, Mr. Sattin! have you brought those gold stuffs I ordered you?

Mer. Yes, madam, I have brought your ladyship some of the finest patterns that were ever made.

Mar. Well, Mr. Sparkle, have you the necklace and earrings with you?

Jew. Yes, madam; and I defy any jeweller in town to show you their equals: they are, I think, the finest water I ever saw; they are finer than the Duchess of Glitter's, which have been so much admired. I have brought you a solitaire too, madam; my Lady Raffle bought the fellow of it yesterday.

Mar. Sure, it has a flaw in it, sir.

Jew. Has it, madam? then there never was a brilliant without one; I am sure, madam, I bought it for a good stone, and if it be not a good stone you shall have it for nothing.

SCENE IV.

LOVEGOLD, MARIANA, MRS. WISELY, JEWELLER, MERCER,
UPHOLSTERER.

Love. It's lost, it's gone, it's irrecoverable; I shall never see it more!

Mar. And what will be the lowest price of the necklace and earrings?

Jew. If you were my sister, madam, I could not 'bate you one farthing of three thousand guineas.

Love. What do you say of three thousand guineas, villain? Have you my three thousand guineas?

Mrs. W. Bless me, Mr. Lovegold! what's the matter?

Love. I am undone! I am ruined! my money is stolen! my dear three thousand guineas, that I received but yesterday, are taken away from the place I had put them in, and I never shall see them again!

Mar. Don't let them make you uneasy, you may possibly recover them; or, if you should not, the loss is but a trifle!

Love. How! a trifle! Do you call three thousand guineas a trifle?

Mrs. W. She sees you so disturbed that she is willing to make as light of your loss as possible, in order to comfort you.

Love. To comfort me! Can she comfort me by calling three thousand guineas a trifle! But, tell me, what were you saying of them? Have you seen them?

Jew. Really, sir, I do not understand you; I was telling the lady the price of a necklace and a pair of earrings, which were as cheap as three thousand guineas as—

Love. How! What? what?

Mar. I can't think them very cheap. However, I am resolved to have them; so let him have the money, sir, if you please.

Love. I am in a dream.

Mar. You will be paid immediately, sir. Well, Mr. Sattin, and pray what is the highest priced gold stuff you have brought?

Merc. Madam, I have one of twelve pounds a yard.

Mar. It must be pretty at that price. Let me have a gown and petticoat cut off.

Love. You shall cut off my head first. What are you doing? Are you mad?

Mar. I am only preparing a proper dress to appear in as your wife.

Love. Sirrah, offer to open any of your pickpocket trinkets here and I'll make an example of you.

Mar. Mr. Lovegold, give me leave to tell you this is a behaviour I don't understand. You give me a fine pattern before marriage of the usage I am to expect after it.

Love. Here are fine patterns of what I am to expect after it.

Mar. I assure you, sir, I shall insist on all the privileges of an English wife. I shall not be taught to dress by my husband. I am myself the best judge of what you can afford; and if I do stretch your purse a little it is for your own honour, sir. The world will know it is your wife that makes such a figure.

Love. Can you bear to hear this, madam?

Mrs. W. I should not countenance my daughter in any extravagance, sir; but the honour of my family, as well as yours, is concerned in her appearing handsomely. Let me tell you, Mr. Lovegold, the whole world is very sensible of your fondness for money. I think it a very great blessing to you that you have met with a woman of a different temper—one who will preserve your reputation in the world whether you will or no. Not that I would insinuate to you that my daughter will ever run you into unnecessary expenses; so far from it, that if you will but generously make her a present of five thousand pounds, to fit herself out at first in clothes and jewels, I dare swear you will not have any other demand on those accounts—I don't know when.

Mar. No, unless a birthnight suit or two, I shall scarce want anything more this twelvemonth.

Love. I am undone, plundered, murdered! However, there is one comfort; I am not married yet.

Mar. And free to choose whether you will marry at all or no.

Mrs. W. The consequence, you know, will be no more than a poor ten thousand pounds, which is all the forfeiture of the breach of contract.

Love. But, madam, I have one way yet. I have not bound my heirs and executors; and so if I hang myself I am off the bargain. In the meanwhile I'll try if I cannot rid my house of this nest of thieves. Get out of my doors, you cutpurses.

Few. Pay me for my jewels, sir, or return them me.

Love. Give him his baubles; give them him.

Mar. I shall not, I assure you. You need be under no apprehension, sir; you see Mr. Lovegold is a little disordered at present; but if you will come to-morrow you shall have your money.

Few. I'll depend on your ladyship, madam.

Love. Who the devil are you? What have you to do here.

Uphol. I am an upholsterer, sir, and am come to new furnish your house.

Love. Out of my doors this instant, or I will disfurnish your head for you; I'll beat out your brains.

Mrs. W. Sure, sir, you are mad.

Love. I was when I signed the contract. Oh! that I had never learnt to write my name!

SCENE V.

CHARLES BUBBLEBOY, LOVEGOLD, MARIANA, MRS. WISELY.

Cha. Your most obedient servant, madam.

Love. Who are you, sir? What do you want here?

Cha. Sir, my name is Charles Bubbleboy.

Love. What's your business?

Cha. Sir, I was ordered to bring some snuff-boxes and rings. Will you please, sir, to look at that snuff-box? there is but one person in England, sir, can work in this manner. If he was but as diligent as he is able, he would get an immense estate, sir; if he had an hundred thousand hands, I could keep them all employed. I have brought you a pair of the new-invented snuffers too, madam. Be pleased to look at them: they are my own invention; the nicest lady in the world may make use of them.

Love. Who sent for you, sir?

Mar. I sent for him, sir.

Cha. Yes, sir, I was told it was a lady sent for me: will you please, madam, to look at the snuff-boxes or rings first?

Love. Will you please to go to the devil, sir, first, or shall I send you?

Cha. Sir?

Love. Get you out of my house this instant, or I'll break your snuff-boxes, and your bones too.

Cha. Sir, I was sent for, or I should not have come. Charles Bubbleboy does not want custom. Madam, your most obedient servant.

SCENE VI.

MARIANA, MRS. WISELY, LOVEGOLD, WHEEDLE.

Mar. I suppose, sir, you expect to be finely spoken of abroad for this: you will get an excellent character in the world by this behaviour.

Mrs. W. Is this your gratitude to a woman who has refused so much better offers on your account?

Love. Oh! would she had taken them! Give me up my contract, and I will gladly resign all right and title whatsoever.

Mrs. W. It is too late now, the gentlemen have had their answers: a good offer, once refused, is not to be had again.

Whe. Madam, the tailor whom your ladyship sent for is come.

Mar. Bid him come in. This is an instance of the regard I have for you. I have sent for one of the best tailors in town to make you a new suit of clothes, that you may appear like a gentleman; for as it is for your honour that I should be well dressed, so it is for mine that you should. Come, madam, we will go in and give farther orders concerning the entertainment.

SCENE VII.

LOVEGOLD, LIST.

Love. Oh, Lappet, Lappet! the time thou hast prophesied of is come to pass.

List. I am your honour's most humble servant. My name is List. I presume I am the person you sent for—the laceman will be here immediately. Will your honour be pleased to be taken measure of first, or look over the patterns?—if you please, we will take measure first. I do not know, sir, who was so kind as to recommend me to you, but I believe I shall give you entire satisfaction. I may defy any tailor in England to understand the fashion better than myself; the thing is impossible, sir. I always visit France twice a year; and though I say it, that should not say it.—Stand upright, if you please, sir—

Love. I'll take measure of your back, sirrah; I'll teach such pickpockets as you are to come here! Out of my doors, you villain!

List. Heyday! sir; did you send for me for this, sir?—I shall bring you in a bill without any clothes.

SCENE VIII.

LOVEGOLD, JAMES, PORTER.

Love. Where are you going? What have you there?

Gas. Some fine wine, sir, that my lady sent for to Mr. Mixture's.—But, sir, it will be impossible for me to get supper ready by twelve, as it is ordered, unless I have more assistance. I want half-a-dozen kitchens, too. The very wildfowl that my lady has sent for will take up a dozen spits.

Love. Oh! oh! it is in vain to oppose it; her extravagance is like a violent fire, that is no sooner stopped in one place than it breaks out in another.—[*Drums beat without.*] Ha! what is the meaning of this? Is my house besieged? Would they would set it on fire, and burn all in it!

Drum. [*without.*] Heavens bless your honour, Squire Lovegold, Madam Lovegold; long life and happiness and many children attend you!—and so God save the king? [*Drums beat.*]

[*LOVE goes out, and soon after the drums cease.*]

Gas. So, he has quieted the drums, I find. This is the roguery of some well-wishing neighbours of his. Well, we shall soon see

which will get the better, my master or my mistress. If my master does, away go I ; if my mistress, I'll stay while there is any house-keeping, which can't be long ; for the riches of my lord mayor will never hold it out at this rate.

SCENE IX.

LOVEGOLD, JAMES.

Love. James ! I shall be destroyed ; in one week I shall not be worth a groat upon earth. Go, send all the provisions back to the tradesmen ; put out all the fires ; leave not so much as a candle burning.

Fas. Sir, I don't know how to do it ; madam commanded me, and I dare not disobey her.

Love. How ! not when I command thee ?

Fas. I have lost several places, sir, by obeying the master against the mistress, but never lost one by obeying the mistress against the master. Besides, sir, she is so good and generous a lady, that it would go against my very heart to offend her.

Love. Plague take her generosity !

Fas. And I don't believe she has provided one morsel more than will be eat. Why, sir, she has invited above five hundred people to supper ; within this hour your house will be as full as Westminster Hall the last day of term ; but I have no time to lose.

Love. Oh ! oh ! What shall I do ?

SCENE X.

LAPPET, LOVEGOLD.

Lap. Where is my poor master ? Oh, sir ! I cannot express the affliction I am in to see you devoured in this manner. How could you, sir, when I told you what a woman she was—how could you undo yourself with your eyes open ?

Love. Poor Lappet ! had I taken thy advice I had been happy.

Lap. And I too, sir ; for, a-lack-day, I am as miserable as you are ; I feel everything for you, sir ; indeed, I shall break my heart upon your account.

Love. I shall be much obliged to you if you do, Lappet.

Lap. How could a man of your sense, sir, marry in so precipitate a manner ?

Love. I am not married ; I am not married.

Lap. Not married !

Love. No, no, no.

Lap. All's safe yet. No man is quite undone till he is married.

Love. I am, I am undone. Oh, Lappet ! I cannot tell it thee. I have given her a bond, a bond, a bond of ten thousand pounds to marry her.

Lap. You shall forfeit it——

Love. Forfeit what ? my life and soul, and blood, and heart ?

Lap. You shall forfeit it —

Love. I'll be buried alive sooner ; no, I am determined I'll marry her first, and hang myself afterwards to save my money.

Lap. I see, sir, you are undone ; and if you should hang yourself, I could not blame you.

Love. Could I but save one thousand by it, I would hang myself with all my soul. Shall I live to die not worth a groat !

Lap. Oh ! my poor master ! my poor master !

[*Crying.*

Love. Why did I not die a year ago ? what a deal had I saved by dying a year ago !—[*A noise without.*] Oh ! oh ! dear Lappet, see what it is ; I shall be undone in an hour—oh !

SCENE XI.

LOVEGOLD, CLERMONT, *richly dressed.*

Love. What is here ? Some of the people who are to eat me up ?

Cler. Don't you know me, sir ?

Love. Know you ! Ha ! What is the meaning of this ?—Oh, it is plain, it is too plain ; my money has paid for all this finery. Ah ! base wretch ! could I have suspected you of such an action, of lurking in my house to use me in such a manner ?

Cler. Sir, I come to confess the fact to you ; and if you will but give me leave to reason with you, you will not find yourself so much injured as you imagine.

Love. Not injured ! when you have stolen away my blood !

Cler. Your blood has not fallen into bad hands. I am a gentleman, sir.

Love. Here's impudence ! A fellow robs me, and tells me he's a gentleman. Tell me who tempted you to it ?

Cler. Ah, sir ! need I say—Love !

Love. Love !

Cler. Yes, love, sir.

Love. Very pretty love indeed ! the love of my guineas.

Cler. Ah, sir ! think not so. Do but grant me the free possession of what I have, and, by Heaven, I'll never ask you more !

Love. Oh, most unequalled impudence ! was ever so modest a request ?

Cler. All your efforts to separate us will be vain ; we have sworn never to forsake each other, and nothing but death can part us.

Love. I don't question, sir, the very great affection on your side ; but I believe I shall find methods to recover—

Cler. By Heavens ! I'll die in defending my right ; and, if that were the case, think not, when I am gone, you ever could possess what you have robbed me of.

Love. Ha ! that's true. He may find ways to prevent the re-

storing it. Well, well, let me delight my eyes at least ; let me see my treasure, and perhaps I may give it you ; perhaps I may.

Cler. Then I am blessed ! Well may you say treasure, for to possess that treasure is to be rich indeed.

Love. Yes, truly, I think three thousand pounds may be well called a treasure. Go, go, fetch it hither ; perhaps I may give it you ; fetch it hither.

Cler. To show you, sir, the confidence I place in you, I will fetch hither all that I love and adore. [Exit.]

Love. Sure, never was so impudent a fellow ; to confess his robbery before my face, and to desire to keep what he has stolen, as if he had a right to it.

SCENE XII.

LOVEGOLD, LAPPET.

Love. Oh, Lappet ! what's the matter ?

Lap. Oh, sir ! I am scarce able to tell you. It is spread about the town that you are married, and your wife's creditors are coming in whole flocks. There is one single debt for five thousand pounds, which an attorney is without to demand.

Love. Oh ! oh ! oh ! let them cut my throat.

Lap. Think what an escape you have had ; think if you had married her——

Love. I am as bad as married to her.

Lap. It is impossible, sir ; nothing can be so bad ; what, you are to pay her ten thousand pounds ! Well, and ten thousand pounds are a sum—they are a sum, I own it—they are a sum ; but what is such a sum compared with such a wife ? Had you married her, in one week you would have been in a prison, sir.

Love. If I am, I can keep my money ; they can't take that from me.

Lap. Why, sir, you will lose twice the value of your contract before you know how to turn yourself ; and, if you have no value for liberty, yet consider, sir, such is the great goodness of our laws that a prison is one of the dearest places you can live in.

Love. Ten thousand pounds ! No ; I'll be hanged, I'll be hanged.

Lap. Suppose, sir, it were possible (not that I believe it is)—but suppose it were possible to make her bate a little ; suppose one could bring her to eight thousand——

Love. Eight thousand devils take her !

Lap. But, dear sir, consider ; nay, consider immediately ; for every minute you lose, you lose a sum. Let me beg you, entreat you, my dear good master, let me prevail on you not to be ruined. Be resolute, sir ; consider every guinea you give saves a score.

Love. Well, if she will consent to—to—to eight hundred. But try, do try, if you can make her 'bate anything of that ; if you can, you shall have a twentieth part of what she 'bates for yourself

Lap. Why, sir, if I could get you off at eight thousand you ought to leap out of your skin for joy.

Love. Would I were out of my skin !

Lap. You will have more reason to wish so when you are in the hands of bailiffs for your wife's debts.

Love. Why was I begotten ? Why was I born ? Why was I brought up ? Why was I not knocked o' the head before I knew the value of money ?

Lap. So, so, more duns, I suppose. Go but into the kitchen, sir, or the hall, and it will have a better effect on you than all I can say.

Love. What have I brought myself to ? What shall I do ? Part with eight thousand pounds ! Misery, destruction, beggary, prisons ! But then, on the other side, are wife, ruin, chains, slavery, torment ! I shall run distracted either way !

Lap. Ah ! would we could once prove you so, you old covetous good for nothing !

SCENE XIII.

MARIANA, LAPPET.

Mar. Well, what success ?

Lap. It is impossible to tell. He is just gone into the kitchen, where, if he is not frightened into our design, I shall begin to despair. They say fear will make a coward brave, but nothing can make him generous ; the very fear of losing all he is worth will scarce bring him to part with a penny.

Mar. And have you acquainted neither Frederick nor Harriet with my intentions ?

Lap. Neither, I assure you. Ah, madam, had I not been able to have kept a secret, I had never brought about those affairs that I have. Were I not secret, lud have mercy upon many a virtuous woman's reputation in this town.

Mar. And don't you think I have kept my real intentions very secret ?

Lap. From every one but me, I believe you have. I assure you I knew them long before you sent for me this afternoon to discover them to me.

Mar. But could you bring him to no terms, no proposals ? Did he make no offer ?

Lap. It must be done all at once, and while you are by.

Mar. So you think he must see me to give anything to be rid of me.

Lap. Hush, hush, I hear him coming again.

SCENE XIV.

LOVEGOLD, LAPPET, MARIANA.

Love. I am undone ! I am undone ! I am eat up ! I am devoured ! I have an army of cooks in my house.

Lap. Dear, madam, consider ; I know eight thousand pounds

are a trifle ; I know they are nothing ; my master can very well afford them ; they will make no hole in his purse ; and, if you should stand out, you will get more.

Love. [*putting his hand before LAPPET'S mouth.*] You lie, you lie, you lie, you lie, you lie ! She never could get more, never should get more ; it is more than I am worth ; it is an immense sum ; and I will be starved, drowned, shot, hanged, burnt, before I part with a penny of it.

Lap. For Heaven's sake, sir, you will ruin all. Madam, let me beg you, entreat you, to 'bate these two thousand pounds. Suppose a lawsuit should be the consequence, I know my master would be cast, I know it would cost him an immense sum of money, and that he would pay the charges of both in the end ; but you might be kept out of it a long time. Eight thousand pounds now are better than ten five years hence.

Mar. No ; the satisfaction of my revenge on a man who basely departs from his word will make me amends for the delay ; and, whatever I suffer, as long as I know his ruin will be the consequence, I shall be easy.

Love. Oh, bloody-minded wretch !

Lap. Why, sir, since she insists on it, what does it signify ? You know you are in her power, and it will be only throwing away more money to be compelled to it at last ; get rid of her at once ; what are two thousand pounds ? Why, sir, the Court of Chancery will eat it up for a breakfast. It has been given for a mistress, and will you not give it to be rid of a wife ?

SCENE XV.

THOMAS, JAMES, MARIANA, LOVEGOLD, LAPPET.

[LOVEGOLD and LAPPET talk apart.]

Tho. Madam, the music is come which your ladyship ordered ; and most of the company will be here immediately.

Jas. Where will your ladyship be pleased the servants shall eat ? for there is no room in the house that will be large enough to entertain them.

Mar. Then beat down the partition, and turn two rooms into one.

Jas. There is no service in the house proper for the dessert, madam.

Mar. Send immediately to the great china-shop in the Strand for the finest that is there.

Love. How ! and will you swear a robbery against her ? that she has robbed me of what I shall give her ?

Lap. Depend on it, sir.

Love. I'll break open a bureau, to make it look the more likely.

Lap. Do so, sir ; but lose no time ? give it her this moment. Madam, my master has consented, and, if you have the contract, he is ready to pay the money. Be sure to break open the bureau, sir.

Mar. Here is the contract.

Love. I'll fetch the money. It is all I am worth in the world.

R

SCENE XVI.

MARIANA, LAPPET.

Mar. Sure, he will never be brought to it yet.*Lap.* I warrant him. But you are to pay dearer for it than you imagine; for I am to swear a robbery against you. What will you give me, madam, to buy off my evidence?*Mar.* And is it possible that the old rogue would consent to such a villainy!*Lap.* Ay, madam; for half that sum he would hang half the town. But truly, I can never be made amends for all the pains I have taken on your account. Were I to receive a single guinea a lie for every one I have told this day, it would make me a pretty tolerable fortune. Ah! madam, what a pity it is that a woman of my excellent talents should be confined to so low a sphere of life as I am! Had I been born a great lady, what a deal of good should I have done in the world!

SCENE XVII.

MARIANA, LAPPET, LOVEGOLD.

Love. Here, here they are—all in bank-notes—all the money I am worth in the world.—(I have sent for a constable; she must not go out of sight before we have her taken into custody.)[*Aside to LAP.*]*Lap.* [to LOVE.] You have done very wisely.*Mar.* There, sir, is your contract. And now, sir, I have nothing to do but to make myself as easy as I can in my loss.

SCENE XVIII.

LOVEGOLD, FREDERICK, CLERMONT, MARIANA, LAPPET,
HARRIET.*Love.* Where is that you promised me? where is my treasure?*Cler.* Here, sir, is all the treasure I am worth—a treasure which the whole world's worth should not purchase.*Love.* Give me the money, sir, give me the money; I say give me the money you stole from me.*Cler.* I understand you not.*Love.* Did you not confess you robbed me of my treasure?*Cler.* This, sir, is the inestimable treasure I meant! Your daughter, sir, has this day blessed me by making me her husband.*Love.* How! Oh, wicked, vile wretch! to run away thus with a pitiful mean fellow, thy father's clerk!*Cler.* Think not your family disgraced, sir. I am at least your equal born; and though my fortune be not so large as for my dearest Harriet's sake I wish, still it is such as will put it out of your power to make us miserable.*Love.* Oh! my money, my money, my money!*Fred.* If this lady does not make you amends for the loss of

your money, resign over all pretensions in her to me, and I will engage to get it restored to you.

Love. How, sirrah ! are you a confederate ? Have you helped to rob me ?

Fred. Softly, sir, or you shall never see your guineas again.

Love. I resign her over to you entirely, and may you both starve together. So, go fetch my gold.

Mar. You are easily prevailed upon, I see, to resign a right which you have not. But were I to resign over myself, it would hardly be the man's fortune to starve whose wife brought him ten thousand pounds.

Love. Bear witness, she has confessed she has the money ; and I shall prove she stole it from me. She has broke open my bureau ; Lappet is my evidence.

Lap. I hope I shall have all your pardons, and particularly yours, madam, whom I have most injured.

Love. A fig for her pardon ; you are doing a right action.

Lap. Then, if there was any robbery, you must have robbed yourself. This lady can be only a receiver of stolen goods ; for I saw you give her the money with your own hands.

Love. How ! I ! you ! What ! what !

Lap. And I must own it, with shame I must own it—that the money you gave her in exchange for the contract, I promised to swear she had stole from you.

Cler. Is it possible Mr. Lovegold could be capable of such an action as this ?

Love. I am undone, undone, undone !

Fred. No, sir, your three thousand guineas are safe yet ! depend upon it, within an hour you shall find them in the same place they were first deposited. I thought to have purchased a reprieve with them ; but I find my fortune has of itself bestowed that on me.

Love. Give 'em me ! give 'em me ! this instant—but then the ten thousand, where are they ?

Mar. Where they ought to be, in the hands of one who I think deserves them. [*Gives them to FREDERICK.*] You see, sir, I had no design to the prejudice of your family. Nay, I have proved the best friend you ever had ; for I presume you are now thoroughly cured of your longing for a young wife.

Love. Sirrah, give me my notes, give me my notes.

Fred. You must excuse me, sir ; I can part with nothing I receive from this lady.

Love. Then I will go to law with that lady, and you, and all of you ; for I will have them again, if law, or justice, or injustice, will give them me.

Cler. Be pacified, sir ; I think the lady has acted nobly in giving that back again into your family which she might have carried out of it.

Love. My family be hanged ! if I am robbed, I don't care who robs me. I would as soon hang my son as another ; and I will

hang him if he does not restore me all I have lost ; for I would not give half the sum to save the whole world. I will go and employ all the lawyers in town ; for I will have my money again, or never sleep more.

[Exit.

Fred. I am resolved we will get the better of him now. But oh, Mariana ! your generosity is much greater in bestowing this sum than my happiness in receiving it. I am an unconscionable beggar, and shall never be satisfied while you have anything to bestow.

Mar. Do you hear him ?

Har. Yes, and begin to approve him ; for your late behaviour has convinced me—

Mar. Dear girl, no more ; you have frightened me already so much to-day, that rather than venture a second lecture I would do whatever you wished ; so, sir, if I do bestow all on you, here is the lady you are to thank for it.

Har. Well, this I will say, when you do a good-natured thing, you have the prettiest way of doing it. And now, Mariana, I am ready to ask your pardon for all I said to-day.

Mar. Dear Harriet, no apologies : all you said I deserved.

SCENE the last.

LAPPET, RAMILIE, FREDERICK, MARIANA, CLERMONT,
HARRIET.

Lap. Treaties are going on on both sides, while you and I seem forgotten.

Ram. Why, have we not done them all the service we can ? What farther have they to do with us ? Sir, there are some people in masquerading habits without.

Mar. Some I sent for to assist in my design on your father : I think we will give them admittance, though we have done without 'em.

All. Oh ! by all means.

Fred. Mrs. Lappet, be assured I have a just sense of your favours ; and both you and Ramilie shall find my gratitude.

[Dance here.

Fred. Dear Clermont, be satisfied I shall make no peace with the old gentleman in which you shall not be included. I hope my sister will prove a fortune equal to your great deserts.

Cler. While I am enabled to support her in an affluence equal to her desires I shall desire no more. From what I have seen lately, I think riches are rather to be feared than wished ; at least, I am sure, avarice, which too often attends wealth, is a greater evil than any that is found in poverty. Misery is generally the end of all vice ; but it is the very mark at which avarice seems to aim : the miser endeavours to be wretched.

He hoards eternal cares within his purse ;

And what he wishes most proves most his curse,

THE NON-JUROR.

(MOLIÈRE'S "LE TARTUFE.")

BY COLLEY CIBBER.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR JOHN WOODVIL.
COLONEL WOODVIL.
MR. HEARTLY.
DOCTOR WOLF.

CHARLES.
LADY WOODVIL.
MARIA.

SCENE.—AN ANTE-CHAMBER OF SIR JOHN'S HOUSE IN LONDON.

ACT I.

SIR JOHN WOODVIL *and the* COLONEL.

Col. Pray consider, sir.

Sir John. So I do, sir, that I am her father, and will dispose of her as I please.

Col. I don't dispute your authority, sir; but as I am your son too, I think it my duty to be concerned for your honour; have not you countenanced his addresses to my sister? Has not she received them? How then is it possible, that either you or she with honour can recede?

Sir John. Why, sir; suppose I was about buying a pad-nag for your sister, and upon enquiry should find him not sound; pray, sir, would there be any great dishonour in being off of the bargain?

Col. With submission, sir, I don't take that to be the case. Mr. Heartly's birth and fortune are too well-known to you; and I dare swear he may defy the world to lay a blemish upon his principles.

Sir John. Why then, sir, since I must be catechized, I must tell you, I don't like his principles; for I am informed he is a time-server, one that basely flatters the Government, and has no more religion than you have.

Col. Sir, we don't either of us think it proper to make boast of our religion; but if you please to enquire, you will find we go to church as orderly as the rest of our neighbours.

Sir John. Ay! to what church?

Col. St. James's Church.—The Established Church.

Sir John. Established Church!

Col. Sir—

Sir John. Nay, you need not stare, sir; and before he values

himself upon going to church, I would first have him be sure he is a Christian

Col. A Christian, sir!

Sir John. Ay, that's my question, whether he is yet christened? I mean by a pastor that had a Divine, uninterrupted, successive right to mark him as a sheep of the true fold?

Col. Is it possible! Are you an Englishman, and offer, sir, a question so uncharitable, not only to him, but the whole nation?

Sir John. Nay, sir, you may give yourself what airs of amazement you please—I won't argue with you; you are both of you too hardened to be converted now; but since you think it your duty, as a son, to be concerned for my errors, I think it as much mine, as a father, to be concerned for yours.—I'll only tell you of them, if you think fit to mend them—so—if not—take the consequence.

Col. [*aside.*] O! give me temper, Heaven! this vile nonjuring zealot! what poisonous principles has he swelled him with!—Well, sir, since you don't think it proper to argue upon this subject, I'll waive it too; but if I may ask it without offence, are these your only reasons for discountenancing Mr. Heartly's addresses to my sister?

Sir John. These! are they not flagrant? would you have me marry my daughter to a pagan? for so he is, and all of you, till you are regularly Christians. In short, son, expect to inherit no estate of mine, unless you resolve to come into the pale of the Church of which I profess myself a member.

Col. I thought I always was, sir, and hope I am so still, unless you have lately been converted to the Roman.

Sir John. No sir, I abhor the thoughts on't; and protest against their errors as much as you do.

Col. If so, sir, where's our difference?

Sir John. Difference! it would make you tremble, sir, to know it! but since it is fit you should know it, look there—[*Gives him a book.*—Read that, and be reformed.

Col. What's here? [*reads.*] *The Case of Schism, &c.* Thank you, sir; I have seen enough of this in the *Daily Courant*, to be sorry it is in any hands but those of the common hangman.

Sir John. Profanation!

Col. And though I always honoured your concern for the Church's welfare, I little thought it was for a Church that is established nowhere?

Sir John. Oh, perverseness! but there is no better to be expected from your course of life: this is all the effects of your modern loyalty, your conversation at Button's. Will you never leave that foul nest of heresy and schism?

Col. Yes, sir, when I see anything like it there; and should think myself obliged to retire, where such principles were started. I own I use the place, because I generally meet there instructive or diverting company.

Sir John. Yes, fine company indeed, Arians, party-poets, players and Presbyterians.

Col. That's a very unusual mixture, sir ; but if a man entertains me innocently, am I obliged to inquire into his profession or principles? Would it not be ridiculous for a Protestant that loves music, to refuse going to the opera, because most of the performers are Papists? But, sir, this seems foreign to my business. Mr. Heartly intends this morning to pay his respects to you, in hopes to obtain your final consent ; and desired me to be present, as a mediator of articles between you.

Sir John. I am glad to hear it.

Col. That's kind, indeed, sir.

Sir John. May be not, sir ; for I will not be at home when he comes.

Col. Nay, pray, sir, it will be but civility, at least, to hear him.

Sir John. And because I won't tell a lie for the matter, I'll go out this moment.

Col. Good sir.

Sir John. But because I won't deceive him, neither, tell him, I would not have him lose his time in fooling after your sister—in short, I have another man in my head for her. [*Exit SIR JOHN.*]

Col. Another man ! it would be worth one's while to know him—Pray Heaven this nonjuring hypocrite has not got some beggarly traitor in his eye for her. I must rid the house of him at any rate, or all the settlement I can hope from my father is a castle in the air ; nor can indeed his life be safe, while such a villain makes it an act of conscience to endanger it ; if his eyes are not soon opened against him, the Crown is more likely to inherit his estate than I am ; and though the Government has been very favourable upon those occasions, it is but a melancholy business to petition for what might have been one's birthright. My sister may be ruined too—here she comes ; if there be another man in the case, she no doubt can let me into the secret.

Enter MARIA.

Sister, good-morrow ; I want to speak with you.

Mar. Nay, but prithee, brother, don't put on that wise politic face then ; why, you look as if the minority had like to have carried a question.

Col. Come, come, a truce with your raillery ; what I have to ask of you is serious, and I beg you would be so in your answer.

Mar. Well then, provided it is not upon the subject of love I will be so—but make haste too—for I have not had my tea yet.

Col. Why it is, and is not upon that subject.

Mar. Oh ! I love a riddle dearly—come—let's hear it.

Col. Nay, pish, if you will be serious, say so.

Mar. O lord ! sir, I beg your pardon—there—there is my whole form and features totally disengaged, and lifeless at your service ; now put them in what posture of attention you think fit.

[*She leans against him, with her arms awkwardly falling to her knees.*]

Col. Was there ever such a giddy devil!—Prithee stand up. I have been talking with my father, and he declares positively you shall not receive any further addresses from Mr. Heartly.

Mar. Are you serious?

Col. He said it this minute, and with some warmth too.

Mar. I am glad on't with all my heart.

Col. How! glad!

Mar. To a degree: do you think a man has any more charms for me for my father's liking him? No, sir, if Mr. Heartly can make his way to me now, he is obliged to me only: besides, now it may have the face of an amour indeed: now one has something to struggle for; there's difficulty, there's danger, there's the dear spirit of contradiction in it too. O, I like it mightily.

Col. I am glad this does not make you think the worse of Heartly—but however, a father's consent might have clapt a pair of horses more to your coach perhaps, and the want of that may pinch your fortune.

Mar. Burn fortune; am not I a fine woman? and have not I above £5,000 in my own hands.

Col. Yes, sister, but with all your charms you have had it in your hands almost these four years; pray consider that too.

Mar. Pshaw! and have not I had the full swing of my own airs and humours these four years? But if I'll humour my father, I'll warrant he'll make it three or four thousand more, with some unlicked lout of a fellow to snub me into the bargain: a comfortable equivalent truly.—No, no, let him light his pipe with his consent if he pleases. Wilful against wife for a wager.

Col. Well said; nothing goes to your heart I find.

Mar. No, no, brother; the suits of my lovers shall not be ended, like those at law, by dull counsel on both sides; I'll hear nothing but what the plaintiff himself can say to me; 'twould be a pretty thing indeed to confine my airs to the directions of a solicitor, to look kind, or cruel, only as the jointure proposed, is, or is not, equal to the fortune my father designs me: what, do you think I'll have my features put into the *Gazette* to be disposed of, like a parcel of dirty acres, by an old master in Chancery to the fairest bidder? No, if I must have an ill match, I'll have the pleasure of playing my own game at least.

Col. There spoke the spirit of a free-born Englishwoman.—Well, I am glad you are not startled at the first part of my news however; but farther—pray, sister, has my father ever proposed any other man to you?

Mar. Another man! let me know why you ask, and I'll tell you.

Col. Why the last words he said to me, were, that he had another man in his head for you.

Mar. And who is it? Who is it? tell me, dear brother, quickly.

Col. Why you don't so much as seem surprised at it!

Mar. No, but impatient. and that's as well you know.

Col. Why, how now, sister?

[Gravely.]

Mar. Why sure, brother, you know very little of female happiness, if you suppose the surprise of a new lover ought to shock a woman of my temper—don't you know that I am a coquette?

Col. If you are, you are the first that ever was sincere enough to own her being so.

Mar. To a lover I grant you; but I make no more of you than a sister; I can say anything to you.

Col. I should have been better pleased if you had not owned it to me—it's a hateful character.

Mar. Ay; it's no matter for that; it's violently pleasant, and there's no law against it that I know of. You had best advise your friend Heartly to bring in a bill to prevent it? All the discarded toasts, prudes, and superannuated virgins would give him their interest, I dare swear: take my word, coquetry has governed the world from the beginning, and will do so to the end on't.

Col. Heartly's like to have a hopeful time on't with you.

Mar. Well, but don't you really know who it is my father intends me?

Col. Not I, really, but I imagined you might, and therefore thought to advise with you about it.

Mar. Nay, he has not opened his lips to me yet—are you sure he's gone out?

Col. You are very impatient to know, methinks? What have you to do to concern yourself about any man but Heartly?

Mar. O lud! O lud! O lud! don't be so wise, prithee brother: why, if you had an empty house to let, would you be displeased to hear there were two people about it? can any woman think herself happy that's obliged to marry only with a Hobson's choice? no, don't think to rob me of so innocent a vanity; for believe me, brother, there is no fellow upon earth, how disagreeable soever, but in the long run of his addresses will utter something, at least, that's worth a poor woman's hearing. Besides, to be a little serious, Heartly has a tincture of jealousy in his temper, which nothing but a substantial rival can cure him of.

Col. O your servant, madam, now you talk reason; I am glad you are concerned enough for Heartly's faults, to think them worth your mending—ha! ha!

Mar. Concerned! Why, did I say that?—look you, I'll deny it all to him. Well, if ever I am serious with you again—

Col. Here he comes; be as merry with him as you please.

Mar. Pshaw!

[*MARIA takes a book from the table and reads.*

Enter HEARTLY.

Hear. Dear Colonel, your servant.

Col. I am glad you did not come sooner, for in the humour my father left me, 'twould not have been a proper time to have pressed your affair. I touched upon it, but—I'll tell you more presently; in the meantime, lose no ground with my sister.

Hear. I shall always think myself obliged to your friendship, let my success be what it will. Madam, your most obedient—What have you got there, pray?

Mar. [*repeating*].

Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick, as her eyes, and as unfixed as those——

Hear. Pray, madam, what is it?

Mar. Favours to none, to all she smiles extends——

Har. Nay, I will see.

[*Struggling.*]

Mar. [*putting him by.*]

Oft she rejects—but never once offends.

Col. Have a care, she has dipped into her own character, and she'll never forgive you if you don't let her through with it.

Hear. I beg your pardon, madam. [*Gravely.*]

Mar. Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
And like the sun, they shine on all alike.—Um—um.

Hear. That is something like, indeed.

Col. You would say so if you knew all.

Hear. All what? Pray what do you mean?

Col. Have a little patience, I'll tell you immediately.

Hear. [*aside.*] Confusion! some coxcomb, now, has been flattering her; I'll be curst else, she's so full of her dear self upon't.

Mar. [*turning to HEARTLY.*]

If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face—and you'll forget them all.

Is not that natural, Mr. Heartly?

Hear. For a woman to expect, it is indeed.

Mar. And can you blame her, when 'tis at the same time a proof of the poor man's passion, and her power?

Hear. So that you think the greatest compliment a lover can make his mistress, is to give up his reason to her!

Mar. Certainly; for what have your lordly sex to boast of but your understanding? And till that's entirely surrendered to her discretion, while the least sentiment holds out against her, a woman must be downright vain to think her conquest completed.

Hear. There we differ, madam; for in my opinion, nothing but the most excessive vanity could value or desire such a conquest.

Mar. O! d'ye hear him, brother? the creature reasons with me! Nay, has the frontless folly to think me in the wrong too! O lud! he'd make a horrid tyrant—positively I won't have him.

Hear. Well, my comfort is, no other man will easily know whether you'll have him or not.

Mar. [*affectedly smiling.*] Am not I a horrid, vain, silly creature, Mr. Heartly?

Hear. A little bordering upon the baby, I must own.

Mar. Laud ! how can you love one so then ? but I don't think you love me though—do you ?

Hear. Yes, faith I do, and so shamefully, that I am in hopes you doubt it.

Mar. Poor man ! he'd fain bring me to reason.

[Smiling in his face.]

Hear. I would indeed, nor am ashamed to own it ; nay, were it but possible to make you serious only when you should be so, you would be the most perfect creature of your sex.

Mar. O lud ! he's civil.

Hear. Come, come, you have good sense ; use me but with that, and make me what you please.

Mar. Laud ! I don't desire to make anything of you, not I.

Hear. Don't look so cold upon me ; by Heaven I can't bear it.

Mar. Well ! now you are tolerable. *[Gently glancing on him.]*

Hear. Come then, be generous, and swear at least you'll never be another's.

Mar. Ah ! Lard ! now you have spoiled all again ; beside, how can I be sure of that before I have seen this t'other man my brother spoke to me of ?

[Reads to herself again.]

Hear. What riddle's this ?

[To the COLONEL.]

Col. I told you you did not know all : to be serious, my father went out but now on purpose to avoid you. In short, he absolutely retracts his promises, says he would not have you fool away your time after my sister, and in plain terms told me he had another man in his head for her.

Hear. Another man ! Confusion ! who ! what is he ? did not he name him ?

Col. No, nor has he yet spoke of him to my sister.

Hear. This is unaccountable.—What can have given him this sudden turn ?

Col. Some whim our conscientious doctor has put in his head, I'll lay my life.

Hear. He !—he can't be such a villain ; he professes a friendship for me.

Col. So much the worse. By the way, I am now upon the scent of a secret, that I hope shortly will prove him a rogue to the whole nation.

Hear. You amaze me.—But on what pretence, what ground, what reason, what interest can he have to oppose me ? This shock is insupportable.

[He stands fixed and mute.]

Col. *[aside to MARIA.]* Are you really as unconcerned now as you seem to be ?

Mar. Thou art a strange dunce, brother ; thou knowest no more of love than I do of a regiment. You shall see now how I'll comfort him. *[She goes to HEARTLY, mimics his posture and uneasiness, then looks seriously in his face, and bursts into a laugh.]*

Hear. I don't wonder at your good humour, madam, when you have so substantial an opportunity to make me uneasy for life.

Mar. O lud ! how wise he is ? Well ! his reproaches have that greatness of soul—the confusion they give one is insupportable. Betty, is the tea ready ?

Enter BETTY.

Bet. Yes, madam.

Mar. Mr. Heartly, your servant.

[*Exit.*]

Col. So, so, you have made a fine spot of work on't indeed.

Hear. Dear Tom, you'll pardon me, if I speak a little freely ; I own the levity of her behaviour at this time gives me harder thoughts than I once believed it possible to have of her.

Col. Indeed, my friend, you mistake her.

Hear. O pardon me, had she any real concern for me, the apprehension of a man addresses, whom yet she never saw, must have alarmed her to be something more than serious.

Col. Not at all, for (let this man be who he will) I take all this levity as a proof of her resolution to have nothing to say to him.

Hear. And pray, sir, may I not as well suspect, that this artful delay of her good nature to me now, is meant as a provisional defence against my reproaches, in case, when she has seen this man, she should think it convenient to prefer him to me ?

Col. No, no, she's giddy, but not capable of so serious a falsehood.

Hear. It's a sign you don't judge her with a lover's eye.

Col. No ; but as a stander by, I often see more of the game than you do. Don't you know that she is naturally a coquette ? And a coquette's play with a serious lover is like a back-game at tables, all open at first ; she'll make you twenty blots—and you—spare none, take them all up, to be sure, while she gains points upon you ; so that when you eagerly expect to end the game on your side, slap—as you were, she whips up your man ; she's fortified, and you are in a worse condition than when you begun with her. Upon which, you know of course, you curse your fortune, and she laughs at you.

Hear. Faith, you judge it rightly—I have always found it so.

Col. In short, you are in haste to be up, and she's resolved to make you play out the game at her leisure ; you play for the fair stake, and she for victory.

Hear. But still, what could she mean by going away so abruptly ?

Col. You grew too serious for her.

Hear. Why, who could bear such trifling ?

Col. You should have laughed at her.

Hear. I can't love at that easy rate.

Col. No ; if you could, the uneasiness would lie on her side.

Hear. Do you then really think she has anything in her heart for me ?

Col. Ay, marry, sir. Ah ! if you could but get her to own that seriously now—lord ! how you could love her !

Hear. And so I could, by heaven ! [*Eagerly embracing him.*]

Col. Ay, but 'tis not the nature of the creature—you must take her upon her own terms; though, faith, I thought she owned a great deal to you but now. Did not you observe, when you were impatient, with what a conscious vanity she cried?—Now you are tolerable.

Hear. Nay, the devil can be agreeable when she pleases.

Col. Well, well, I'll undertake for her; if my father don't stand in your way, we are well enough, and I don't question but the alarm he has given us, like his other politic projects, will end all *in fumo*.

Hear. What says my lady? you don't think she's against us?

Col. I dare swear she is not—she's of so soft, so sweet a disposition, that even provocation can't make her your enemy.

Hear. How came so fine a creature to marry your father with such a vast inequality of years?

Col. Want of fortune, Frank. She was poor and beautiful; he rich and amorous. She made him happy, and he her—

Hear. A lady.

Col. And a jointure. Now, she's the only one in the family that has power with our precise doctor, and I dare engage she'll use it with him, to persuade my father from anything that's against your interest. By the way, you must know, I have some shrewd suspicions that this sanctified rogue is carnally in love with her.

Hear. O, the liquorish rascal!

Col. You shall judge by the symptoms: first, he's jealous of every male thing that comes near her; and under a friendly pretence of guarding my father's honour, has persuaded him to abolish her assemblies: nay, at the last masquerade this conscientious spy (unknown to her) was eternally at her elbow in the habit of a Cardinal. At dinner he never fails to sit next her, and will eat nothing but what she helps him; always takes her side in argument, and when he bows after grace, constantly ogles her; bids my sister, if she would look lovely, learn to dress by her; and at the tea table, I have seen the impudent goat most lusciously sip off her leavings. She lost one of her slippers t'other day (by the way, she has a mighty pretty foot), and what do you think was become of it?

Hear. You puzzle me.

Col. Egad, this love-sick monkey had stole it for a private plaything; and one of the housemaids, when she cleaned his study, found it there, with one of her old gloves in the middle of it.

Hear. A very proper relic to put him in mind of his devotions to Venus.

Col. But mum! here he comes.

Enter DOCTOR WOLF and CHARLES.

Doct. Charles, step up into my study, and bring down half a dozen more of those Manual Devotions that I composed for the use of our friends in prison; and, dost thou hear? leave this writing there,

but bring me the key, and then bid the butler ring to prayers.—[*Exit CHARLES.*] Mr. Heartly, I am your most faithful servant. I hope you and the good Colonel will stay and join in the private duties of the family.

Hear. With all my heart, sir, provided you'll do the duty of a subject too, and not leave out the prayer for the Royal Family.

Doct. The good Colonel knows I never do omit it.

Col. Sometimes, doctor ; but I don't remember I ever once heard you name them.

Doct. That's only to shorten the service, lest in so large a family some few vain, idle souls might think it tedious ; and we ought, as it were, to allure them to what's good, by the gentlest, easiest means we can.

Hear. How ! how, doctor ! Are you sure that's your only reason for leaving their names out ?

Doct. But pray, sir, why is naming them so absolutely necessary, when Heaven, without it, knows the true intention of our hearts ?—Besides, why should we, when we so easily may avoid it, give the least colour of offence to tender consciences ?

Col. Ay ! now you begin to open, doctor.

Hear. Have a care, sir, the conscience that equivocates in its devotions must have the blackest colour hell can paint it with.

Col. Well said ! to him Heartly.

Hear. Your conscience, I dare say, won't be easily convinced, while your scruples turn to so good account in a private family.

Doct. What, am I to be baited then ?—but 'twon't be always holiday.—[*Frowning.*] The time's now yours, but mine may come.

Col. What do you mean, sir ?

Doct. Sir, I shall not explain myself, but make your best of what I've said. I'm not to be entrapped by all your servile spies of power—but power, perhaps, may change its hands, and you, ere long, as little dare to speak your mind as I do.

Col. [*taking him by the collar.*] Hark you, sirrah ! Dare you menace the Government in my hearing ?

Hear. Nay, colonel !

[*Interposing.*]

Doct. 'Tis well !

Col. Traitor ! but that our laws have chains and gibbets for such villains, I'd this moment crackle all thy bones to splinters.

[*Shakes him.*]

Doct. Very well ! your father, sir, shall know my treatment.

Hear. Nay, dear colonel, let him go.

Col. I ask your pardon, Frank, I am ashamed that such a wretch could move me so.

Hear. Come, compose yourself.

Doct. [*aside, and recovering himself.*] No ! I'll take no notice of it ; I know he's warm and weak enough to tell this as his own story to his father—let him—'tis better so—'twill but confirm Sir John in his good opinion of my charity, and serve to ruin him the faster.

[*Exit.*]

Hear. Was there ever so insolent a rascal?

Col. The dog will one day provoke me to beat his brains out.

Hear. Who could have believed such outrageous arrogance could have lurked under so lamb-like an outside?

Col. This fellow has the spleen and spirit of ten Becketts in him.

Hear. What the devil is he? Whence came he? What's his original? Is he really a doctor?

Col. So he pretends, and that he lost his living in Ireland, upon his refusing the oaths to the Government. Now I have made the strictest inquiries, and can't find the least evidence that ever he was in the country. But (as I hinted to you) there is now in prison a poor unhappy rebel I went to school with, whose pardon I am soliciting, and he assures me he knew him very well in Flanders; and in such circumstances, as when it can be serviceable to me to know them, he faithfully promises to discover, but begs till then I will not insist upon it.

Hear. Egad! this intelligence may be worth your cherishing.

Col. Ah! here's my sister again.

Enter MARIA, hastily, DOCTOR WOLF following.

Mar. You'll find, sir, I will not be used thus; nor shall you credit with my father protect your insolence to me.

Hear. and Col. What's the matter?

Mar. Nothing; pray be quiet—I don't want you—stand out of the way! *[They retire.]*

Col. What has the dog done to her?

Mar. How durst you bolt with such authority into my chamber, without giving me notice?

Hear. Confusion!

Col. Now, Frank, whose turn is it to keep their temper? *[Apart.]*

Hear. *[struggling.]* 'Tis not mine, I'm sure. *[Apart.]*

Col. Hold!—If my father won't resent this, 'tis then time enough for me to do it. *[Apart.]*

Doct. Compose your transport, madam; I came by your father's desire, who being informed that you were entertaining Mr. Heartly, grew impatient, and gave his positive command that you attend him instantly, or he himself, he says, will fetch you.

Hear. So! now the storm is rising.

Doct. So for what I have done, madam, I had his authority, and shall leave him to answer you.

Mar. 'Tis false, he gave you no authority to insult me; or if he had, did you suppose I would bear it from you? What is it you presume upon? your function! Does that exempt you from the manners of a gentleman?

Doct. Shall I have any answer to your father, lady?

Mar. I'll send him none by you.

Doct. I shall inform him so.

[Exit.]

Mar. A saucy puppy.

Col. Prithee, sister, what has the fellow done to you?

Hear. I beg you tell us, madam.

Mar. Nay, no great matter ; but I was sitting carelessly in my dressing-room—a—a fastening my garter, with my face just towards the door, and this impudent cur, without the least notice, comes bounce in upon me—and my hoop happening to hitch in the chair, I was an hour before I could get down my petticoats.

Hear. The rogue must be corrected.

Col. Yet, egad, I can't help laughing at the accident ! What a ridiculous figure must she make ! Ha ! ha !

Mar. Ha ! you are as impudent as he, I think. Well, but had not I best go to my father ?

Hear. Now, now, dear Tom, speak to her before she goes ; this is the very crisis of my life. *[Apart to the COLONEL.]*

Mar. What does he say, brother ?

Col. Why he wants to have me speak to you, and I would have him do it himself.

Mar. Ay, come, do, Heartly, I am in good humour now.

Hear. O Maria ! my heart is bursting——

Mar. Well, well, out with it.

Hear. Your father, now, I see, is bent on parting us.—Nay, what's yet worse, perhaps, will give you to another—I cannot speak—Imagine what I want from you.

Mar. Well—O lud ! one looks so silly though, when one's serious—O gad—in short, I cannot get it out.

Col. I warrant you, try again.

Mar. O lud !—well—if one must be teased, then—why he must hope, I think.

Hear. Is't possible ? Thus——

Col. Buz—*[stopping his mouth]* Not a syllable ; she has done very well ; I bar all heroics ; if you press it too far, I'll hold six to four she is off again in a moment.

Hear. I am silenced.

Mar. Now am I on tiptoe to know what odd fellow my father has found out for me.

Hear. I'd give something to know him.

Mar. He is in a terrible fuss at your being here, I find—I had best go to him.

Col. By all means.

Mar. O bless us ! here he comes, piping hot, to fetch me ! Now we are all in a fine pickle.

Enter SIR JOHN, hastily.—He takes MARIA under his arm, cocks his hat, nods, frowning at HEARTLY, and carries her off.

Col. So—Well said, Doctor ! 'tis he, I'm sure, has blown this fire. What horrid hands is this poor family fallen into ! and how the traitor seems to triumph in his power ! How little is my father like himself ! by nature open, just and generous ; but this vile hypocrite drives his weak passions like the wind, and I foresee at last will dash him on his ruin.

Hear. Nothing but your speedily detecting him can prevent it.

Col. I have a thought, and it is the only one that can expose him to my father.—Come, Frank, be cheerful; in some unguarded hour, we yet, perhaps, this lurking thief

Without his holy vizard, may surprise,
And lay th' impostor naked to his eyes.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

CHARLES, *with a writing in his hand.*

Charles. 'Tis so. I have long suspected where his zeal would end, in the making of his private fortune; but then to found it on the ruin of his patron's children makes me shudder at the villainy. What desperation may a son be driven to, so barbarously disinherited? Besides, his daughter, fair Maria, too, is wronged—wronged in the most tender point; for so extravagant is this settlement, it leaves her not a shilling, but on her conditionally marrying with the doctor's consent, which seems, by what I've heard, intended as an expedient, to oblige her to accept the doctor himself for her husband. Now 'twere but an honest part to let Maria know this snare that's laid for her. This deed's not signed, and might be yet prevented. It shall be so—'twere folly not to try; my condition can't be worse. Who knows how far her good nature may think herself obliged for the discovery? Must he ruin, as he has done mine, all families he comes into?

Enter SIR JOHN, LADY WOODVIL and MARIA.

Sir John. O, Charles, your master wants you to transcribe some letters.

Charles. Sir, I'll wait on him.

[*Exit CHARLES, bowing respectfully to the ladies.*]

Mar. A pretty well-bred fellow that.

Sir John. Ay, ay; but he has better qualities than his good breeding; he is honest.

Mar. He's always clean, too.

Sir John. I wonder, daughter, when thou wilt take notice of a man's real merit. Humph! well bred, and clean forsooth. Would not one think, now, she were describing a coxcomb?

Mar. But, dear papa, do you make no allowance for one's taste?

Sir John. Taste; ha! and one's taste? That Madam One is to me the most provoking, impertinent jade alive; and taste is the true picture of her senseless, sickly appetite. When do you hear my wife talk at this rate? and yet she is as young as your fantastical ladyship?

Lady W. Maria's of a cheerful temper, my dear; but I know you don't think she wants discretion.

Sir John. I shall try that presently, and you, sweetheart, shall judge between us; in short, daughter, your course of life is but one

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continual round of playing the fool to no purpose, and therefore I am resolved to make you think seriously, and marry.

Mar. That I shall do before I marry, sir, you may depend upon't.

Sir John. Um—that I am not so sure of; but you may depend upon my having thought seriously, and that's as well; for the person I intend you, is of all the world the only man can make you truly happy.

Mar. And of all the world, sir, that's the only man I'll positively marry.

Lady W. [*aside to MAR.*] Thou hast rare courage, Maria. If I had such a game to play I should be frightened out of my wits.

Mar. Lord, madam, he'll make nothing on't, depend upon it.

Sir John. Mind what I say to you. This wonderful man, I say—first, as to his principles both in Church and State, is unquestionable. [*Aside.*]

Mar. Sir, I leave all that to you, for I should never ask him a question about either of them.

Sir John. You need not; I am fully satisfied of both; he is a true, staunch member of the English Catholic Church.

Mar. Methinks, though, I would not have him a Roman Catholic, sir, because, you know, of double taxes.

Sir John. No, he's no Roman.

Mar. Very well, sir—

Sir John. Then as to the State, he'll shortly be one of the most considerable men in the kingdom, and that, too, in an office for life, which, on whatsoever pretence of misbehaviour, no Civil Government can deprive him of.

Mar. That's fine indeed; I was afraid he had been a clergyman.

Sir John. I have not yet said what his function is. As for his private life, he's sober.

Mar. O! I should hate a sot.

Sir John. Chaste.

Mar. Ahem!

Sir John. What is't you sneer at, madam? You want one of your fine gentlemen rakes, I suppose, that are snapping at every woman they meet with.

Mar. No, no, sir, I am very well satisfied—I—I should not care for such a sort of man no more than I should for one that every woman was ready to snap at.

Sir John. No, you'll be secure from jealousy; he has experience, ripeness of years; he is almost forty-nine. Your sex's vanities will have no charm for him.

Mar. But all this while, sir, I don't find that he has any charm for our sex's vanity. How does he look? Is he tall, well-made? Does he dress, sing, talk, laugh, and dance well? Has he a good air, good teeth, fine eyes, fine fair periwig? Does he keep his chaise, coach, chariot, and Berlin with six flouncing Flanders?

Does he wear blue velvet, clean white stockings, and subscribe to the opera?

Sir John. Was there ever so profligate a creature? What will this age come to?

Lady W. Nay, Maria! here I must be against you. Now you are blind indeed; a woman's happiness has little to do with the pleasure her husband takes in his own person.

Sir John. Right.

Lady W. 'Tis not how he looks; but how he loves is the point.

Sir John. Good again!

Lady W. And a wife is much more secure, that has charms for her husband, than when the husband has only charms for her.

Sir John. Admirable! Go on, my dear.

Lady W. Do you think, child, a woman of five-and-twenty may not be much happier with an honest man of fifty, than the finest woman of fifty with a young fellow of five-and twenty?

Sir John. Mark that!

Mar. Ay, but when two five-and-twenties come together, dear papa, you must allow they have a chance to be fifty times as pleasant and frolicsome.

Sir John. Frolicsome! why, you idiot, what have frolics to do with solid happiness? I am ashamed of you. Go! you talk worse than a girl at a boarding-school. Frolicsome! as if marriage were only a licence for two people to play the fool according to law? Methinks, madam, you have a better example of happiness before your face. Here's one has ten times your understanding, and she, you find, has made a different choice.

Mar. Lord, sir! how you talk! you don't consider people's temper. I don't say my lady is not in the right; but then you know, papa, she's a prude, and I am a coquette; she becomes her character very well, I don't deny it, and I hope you see every thing I do is as consistent with mine. Your wise folks may lay down what rules they please; but 'tis constitution that governs us all, and you can no more bring me, sir, to endure a man of forty-nine, than you can persuade my lady to dance in a church to the organ.

Sir John. Why, you wicked wretch, could anything persuade you to that?

Mar. Lord, sir! I won't answer for anything I should do when the whim's in my head. You know I always loved a little flirtation.

Sir John. O horrible! My poor mother has ruined her; leaving her a fortune in her own hands, has turned her brain; in short, your sentiments of life are shameful, and I am resolved upon your instant reformation; therefore, as an earnest of your obedience, I shall first insist, that you never see young Heartly more; for, in one word, the good and pious Doctor Wolf is the man that I have decreed your husband.

Mar. Ho! ho! ho!

[*Laughing aloud.*]

Sir John. 'Tis very well; this laugh you think becomes you, but I shall spoil your mirth; no more—give me a serious answer.

Mar. [*gravely*.] I ask your pardon, sir ; I should not have smiled, indeed, could I have supposed it possible that you were serious.

Sir John. You'll find me so.

Mar. I am sorry for it ; but I have an objection to the doctor, sir, that most fathers think a substantial one.

Sir John. Name it.

Mar. Why, sir, you know he is not worth a groat.

Sir John. That's more than you know, madam ; I am able to give him a better estate than I am afraid you'll deserve.

Mar. How, sir ?

Sir John. I have told you what's my will, and shall leave you to think on't.

Enter CHARLES.

Charles. [*aside to SIR JOHN.*] Sir, if you are at leisure, the doctor desires a private conference with you, upon business of importance.

Sir John. Where is he ?

Charles. In his own chamber, sir, just taking his leave of the Count and another gentleman, that came this morning express from Avignon ; he has sent you, too, the note you asked him for.

Sir John. 'Tis well ; I'll come to him immediately. [*Exit CHARLES.*] Daughter, I am called away, and therefore have only time to tell you, as my last resolution, that if you expect a shilling from me, the doctor is your husband, or I'm no more your father.

[*Exit SIR JOHN, and drops the paper.*]

Mar. O madam ! I am at my wits' end, not for the little fortune I may lose in disobeying my father ; but it startles me to find what a dangerous influence this fellow has over all his actions.

Lady W. Dear Maria, I am now as much alarmed as you ; for though in compliance to your father, I have been always inclined to think charitably of this doctor, yet now I am convinced 'tis time to be upon our guard—he's stepping into his estate, too !

Mar. Here's my brother, madam, we'll consult with him.

To them the COLONEL.

Col. Madam, your most obedient.—Well, sister, is the secret out ? Who is this pretty fellow my father has picked up for you ?

Mar. Even our agreeable doctor.

Col. You are not serious.

Lady W. He's the very man, I can assure you, sir.

Col. Confusion ! What, would the Jewish cormorant devour the whole family ? Your ladyship knows he is secretly in love with you too.

Lady W. Fie ! fie ! Colonel.

Col. I ask your pardon, madam, if I speak too freely ; but I am sure, by what I have seen, your ladyship must suspect something of it.

Lady W. I am sorry anybody else has seen it ; but I must own

his civilities of late have been something warmer than I thought became him.

Col. How then are these opposites to be reconciled ; can the rascal have the assurance to think both these points are to be carried ? But he does nothing like other people ; he's a contradiction even to his own character ; most of your non-jurors now are generally people of a free and open disposition, mighty pretenders to a conscience of honour indeed ; but you seldom see them put on the least show of religion ; but this formal hypocrite always has it at his tongue's end, and there it sticks, for it never gets into his heart ! I'll answer for him.

Lady W. Ay, but that's the charm that first got him into Sir John's heart ; who, good man, is himself, I am sure, sincere ; however now misguided, 'twas not so much his principles of government, as his well painted piety ; his seeming self-denial, resignation, patience, and humble outside, that gave him first so warm a lodging in his bosom.

Mar. My lady has judged it perfectly right.

Col. I am afraid it's too true : there has been his surest footing ! But here we are puzzled again—what subtle fetch can he have in being really in love with your ladyship, and at the same time making such a bustle to marry my sister ?

Mar. Truly one would not suspect him to be so termagant : I fancy the gentleman might have his hands full of one of us.

Col. And yet his zeal pretends to be so shocked at all indecent amours, that in the country he used to make the maids lock up the turkey-cocks every Saturday night, for fear they should gallant the hens on a Sunday.

Lady W. O ! ridiculous.

Col. Upon my life, madam, my sister told me so.

Mar. I tell you so : You impudent—

Lady W. Fie ! Maria, he only jests with you.

Mar. How can you be such a monster to be playing the fool here, when you have more reason to be frighted out of your wits ? You don't know, perhaps, that my father declares he'll settle a fortune upon this fellow too.

Col. What do you mean ?

Lady W. 'Tis too true ; 'tis not three minutes since he said so.

Col. Nay, then 'tis time indeed his eyes were opened ; and give me leave to say, madam, 'tis only in your power to save not only me, but even my father too from ruin.

Lady W. I shall easily come into anything of that kind, that's practicable—what is it you propose ?

Col. Why, if this fellow (which I am sure of) is really in love with you, give him a fair opportunity to declare himself, and leave me to make my advantage of it.

Lady W. I apprehend you—I am loath to do a wrong thing—

Mar. Dear madam, it's the only way in the world to expose him to my father.

Lady W. I'll think of it——

[*Musing.*

Col. When you do, madam, I am sure you will come into it. How now! What paper's this? it's the doctor's hand.

Mar. I believe my father dropped it.

Col. What's here? [*Reads.*]

Laid out at several times for the Secret Service of His M——.

	£	s.	d.
May the 28th, For six baskets of rue and thyme	0	18	0
The 29th, Ditto, Two cart-loads of oaken boughs	2	0	0
June the 10th, For ten bushels of white roses	1	10	0
Ditto, Given to the bell-ringers of several parishes	10	15	0
Ditto, To Simon Chaunter, parish clerk, for his selecting proper staves adapted to the day	5	7	6
Ditto, For lemons and arrack sent into Newgate	9	5	0

Col. Well, while they drink it in Newgate, much good may it do them.

	£	s.	d.
Paid to Henry Conscience, juryman, for his extraordinary trouble in acquitting Sir Preston Rebel of his indictment	53	15	0
Allowed to Patrick MacRogue, of the Foot Guards, for prevailing with his comrade to desert	4	6	6
Given as smart-money to Humphry Stanch, cobbler, lately whipped for speaking his mind of the Government	3	4	6
Paid to Abel Perkin, news writer, for divers seasonable paragraphs	5	0	0
August the 1st, Paid to John Shoplift and Thomas Highway, for endeavouring to put out the enemy's bonfire	2	3	0
August the 2nd, Paid the Surgeon for sear-cloth, for their bruises	1	1	6

Was there ever such a heap of stupid, cold-scented treason? Now, madam, I hope you see the necessity of blowing up this traitor. These are lengths I did not think my father had gone with him. What vile, what low sedition, has he made him stoop to?

Lady W. I tremble at the precipice he stands on!

Mar. O bless us! I am in a cold sweat, dear brother, leave it where you found it——

Lady W. By all means; if Sir John should know it's in your hands, it may make him desperate——

Col. You are in the right, madam. [*He lays down the paper.*

Lady W. Let's steal into the next room, and observe that nobody else takes it up; he'll certainly come back to look for't.

Col. But I must leave you, poor Heartly stays for me at White's; and he'll sit upon thorns till I bring him an account of his new rival.

Mar. Well, well, get you gone then. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SIR JOHN in a hurry.

Sir John. Undone! Ruined! where could I drop this paper?—Hold—let's see—[*He finds it.*] Ah! here it is. What a blessed escape was this? If my hot-brained son had found it, I suppose by to-morrow he would have been begging my estate for the discovery—

Enter DOCTOR WOLF.

O Doctor ! all's well ; i have found my paper.

Doct. I am sincerely glad of it. It might have ruined us.

Sir John. Well, sir, what say our last advices from Avignon ?

Doct. All goes right. The Council has approved our scheme, and press mightily for dispatch among our friends in England.

Sir John. But pray, Doctor—

Doct. Hold, sir, now we are alone, give me leave to inform you better. Not that I am vain of any worldly title ; but since it has pleased our Court to dignify me, our Church's right obliges me to take it.

Sir John. Pray, sir, explain.

Doct. Our last express has brought me this—*[He shows a writing]* which, far unworthy as I am, promotes me to the vacant See of Thetford.

Sir John. Is it possible ? My lord, I joy in your advancement.

Doct. It is indeed a spiritual comfort to find my labours in the cause are not forgotten ; though I must own some less conspicuous instance of their favour had better suited me. Such high distinctions are invidious ; and it would really grieve me, sir, among my friends, to meet with envy where I only hope for love ; not but I submit in any way to serve them.

Sir John. Ah ! good man ! this meekness will, I hope, one day be rewarded—but pray, sir—my lord !—I beg your lordship's pardon—pray what other news ? how do all our friends ? are they in heart, and cheerful ?

Doct. To a man ! never in such sanguine hopes—the Court's extremely thronged—never was there such a concourse of warlike exiles ; though they talk, this sharp season, of removing farther into Italy, for the benefit of milder air ; well, the Catholics are the sincerest friends !

Sir John. Nay, I must do them justice, they are truly zealous in the cause, and it has often grieved my heart, that our Church's differences are so utterly irreconcilable.

Doct. O nourish still that charitable thought ! there's something truly great and humane in it ; and really, sir, if you examine well the doctrines laid down by my learned predecessor, in his case of schism, you will find those differences are not so terribly material as some obstinate schismatics would paint them. Ah ! could we but be brought to temper, a great many seeming contradictions might be reconciled on both sides ; but while the laity will interpret for themselves, there is indeed no doing it. Now, could we, sir, like other nations, but once restrain that monstrous licence. Ah ! sir, a union then might soon be practicable.

Sir John. Ah ! 'twill never do here ; the English are a stubborn, headstrong people, and have been so long indulged in the use of their own senses, that while they have eyes in their heads, you will never be able to persuade them they can't see, there's no making them

give up their human evidences ; and your *Credo, quia impossibile est*, is an argument they will always make a jest of. No, no, it is not force will do the thing ; your pressed men don't always make the best soldiers. And truly, my Lord, we seem to be wrong too in another point, to which I have often imputed the ill success of our cause ; and that is, the taking into our party so many loose persons of dissolute and abandoned morals, fellows whom in their daily private course of life, the pillory and gallows seem to groan for.

Doct. 'Tis true indeed, and I have often wished 'twere possible to do without them, but in a multitude all men won't be all saints ; and then again they are really useful ; nay, and in many things, that sober men will not stoop to—they serve, poor curs, to bark at the Government in the open streets, and keep up the wholesome spirit of clamour in the common people ; and, sir, you cannot conceive the wonderful use of clamour, 'tis so teasing to a ministry, it makes them wince and fret, and grow uneasy in their posts. Ah ! many a comfortable point has been gained by clamour ! 'tis in the nature of mankind to yield more to that than reason. Ev'n Socrates himself could not resist it ; for, wise as he was, yet you see his wife Xantippe carried all her points by clamour. Come, come, clamour is a useful monster, and we must feed the hungry mouths of it ; it being of the last importance to us, that hope to change the Government, to let it have no quiet.

Sir John. Well, there is indeed no resisting mere necessity.

Doct. Besides, if we suffer our spirits to cool here, at home, our friends abroad will send us over nothing but excuses.

Sir John. 'Tis true, but still I am amazed, that France so totally should have left us.—Mardyke, they say, will certainly be demolished.

Doct. No matter, let them go—we have made a good exchange, our new ally is yet better, as he is less suspected. But to give them their due, we have no spirits among us like the women,—the ladies have supported our cause with a surprising constancy. O ! there's no daunting them, even with ill success ! they will starve their very vanities, their vices, to feed their loyalty ; I am informed that my good lady, Countess of Night-and-Day, has never been seen in a new gown, or has once thrown a die at any of the assemblies, since our last general contribution.

Sir John. O my good lord, if our Court abroad but knew what obligations they have to your indefatigable endeavours——

Doct. Alas ! sir, I can only boast an honest heart, my power is weak, I only can assist them with my prayers and zealous wishes ; or if I had been serviceable, have not you, sir, overpaid me ? Your daughter, sir, the fair Maria, is a reward no merit can pretend to.

Sir John. Nay, good my lord, this tender gratitude confounds me. O ! this insensible girl.—Pray excuse me—— [Weeps.]

Doct. You seemed concerned, pray what's amiss ?

Sir John. That I should be the father of so blind a child, alas ! she slight's the blessing I proposed, she sees you not, my lord, with

my fond eyes ; but lay not, I beseech you, at my door, the ungrateful stubbornness of a thoughtless girl.

Doct. Nay, good sir, be not thus concerned for me ; we must allow her female modesty a time ; your strict commands perhaps too suddenly surprised her ; maids must be slowly, gently dealt with ; and might I, sir, presume to advise——

Sir John. Anything ; your will shall govern me and her.

Doct. Then, sir, abate of your authority, and let the matter rest a while. Suppose I first should beg your good lady, sir, to be my friend to her. Women will hear from their own sex what sometimes, even from the man they like, would startle them. May I have your permission, sir, when dinner is removed, to entertain my lady on this subject privately ?

Sir John. O, by all means, and, troth, it is an excellent thought. I'll go this instant, and prepare her to receive you, and will myself contrive your opportunity.

Doct. You are too good to me, sir—too bountiful.

Sir John. Nay, now, my Lord, you drive me from you.

Doct. Pray pardon me.

Sir John. No more I beg you, good my Lord—your servant.

[*Exit.*]

Doct. Ha ! ha ! What noble harvests have been reaped from bigoted credulity, nor ever was a better instance of it. Would it not make one smile ! that it should ever enter into the brains of this man (who can in other points distinguish like a man) that a Protestant Church can never be secure till it has a Popish Prince to defend it.

Enter CHARLES.

So, Charles, hast thou finished those letters ?

Charles. I have brought them, sir.

Doct. 'Tis very well ; let them be sealed without a direction, and give them to Aaron Sham, the Jew, when he calls for them. O ! and—here, step yourself this afternoon to Mr. Defeazance, of Gray's Inn, and give him this thirty pound bill from Sir Harry Foxhound ; beg him to sit up night and day till the writings are finished ; for his trial certainly comes on this week ; he knows we can't always be sure of a jury, and a moment's delay may make the Commissioners lay hold of his estate.

Charles. My Lord, I'll take the utmost care.

Doct. Well, Charles.

[*Gravely smiling.*]

Charles. Sir John has told me of the new duty I ought to pay you when in private.

Doct. But take especial heed that it be only private.

Charles. Your Lordship need not caution me. My Lord, I hear another whisper in the family ; I'm told you'll shortly be allied to it. Sir John, they say, has actually consented ; I hope, my Lord, you'll find the fair Maria, too, as yielding.

Doct. Such a proposal has indeed been started, but it will end in

nothing. Maria is a giddy, wanton thing, not formed to make a wise man happy ; her life's too vain, too sensual to elevate a heart like mine. No, no, I have views more serious.

Charles. O, my fluttering joy !

[*Aside.*

Doct. Marriage is a state too turbulent for me.

Charles. But with Sir John's consent, my Lord, her fortune may be considerable.

Doct. Thou knowest, Charles, my thoughts of happiness were never formed on fortune.

Charles. No ! I find that by the settlement.

[*Aside.*

Doct. Or if they were, they would be there impossible. Maria's vain distaste of me I know is as deeply rooted as my contempt of her ; and canst thou think I'd stain my character to be a wanton's mockery, to follow through the wilds of folly she would lead me, to cringe and doat upon a senseless toy, that every feather in a hat can purchase ?

Charles. But may not Sir John take it ill, my Lord, to have her slighted ?

Doct. No, no, her ridiculous aversion will secure me from his reproaches.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, my master desires to speak with you.

Doct. I'll wait on him. Charles, you'll take care of my directions.

Charles. I'll be sure, sir.—[*Exit Doctor.*] Kind Heaven, I thank thee !—this bar so unexpectedly removed gives vigour to my heart, and is, I hope, an omen of its fortune. But I must lose' no time, the writing may be every moment called for ; this is her chamber.

He knocks softly, and BETTY enters to him.

Is your lady busy ?

Bett. I think she's only a reading.

Charles. Will you do me the favour to let her know, if she is at leisure, I beg to speak with her upon some earnest business.

MARIA entering with a book.

Mar. Who's that ?

Bett. She's here—Mr. Charles, madam, desires to speak with you.

Mar. O ! your servant, Mr. Charles—here, take this odious Homer, and lay him up again ; he tires me. [Exit BETTY with the book. How could the blind wretch make such a horrid fuss about a fine woman, for so many volumes together, and give us no account of her amours ? You have read him I suppose in the Greek, Mr. Charles.

Charles. Not lately, madam.

Mar. But do you so violently admire him now ?

Charles. The critics say he has his beauties, madam, but Ovid has been always my favourite.

Mar. Ovid ! O ! he's ravishing.

Charles. And so art thou to madness.

[*Aside.*

Mar. Lord ! how could one do to learn Greek ; was you a great while about it ?

Charles. It has been half the business of my life, madam.

Mar. That's cruel now ! then you think one can't be mistress of it in a month or two.

Charles. Not easily, madam.

Mar. They tell me it has the softest tone for love, of any language in the world ; I fancy I could soon learn it—I know two words of it already.

Charles. Pray, madam, what are they ?

Mar. Stay, let me see—O—ay—zoe, kai, psyche.

Charles. I hope you know the English of 'em, madam.

Mar. O lud ! I hope there's no harm in it ? I am sure I heard the doctor say it to my lady—pray what is it ?

Charles. You must first imagine, madam, a tender lover gazing on his mistress, and then indeed they have a softness in 'em, as thus—zoe, kai psyche ! my life ! my soul !

Mar. O the impudent young rogue ! how his eyes spoke too !—
[*Aside.*—What the deuce can he want with me !—

Charles. I have startled her ; she muses.

[*Aside.*

Mar. It always ran in my head this fellow had something in him above his condition—I'll know presently.—[*Aside.*] Well, but your business with me, Mr. Charles ; you have something of love in your head now, I'll lay my life on't.

Charles. I never yet durst own it, madam.

Mar. Why, what's the matter ?

Charles. My story is too melancholy to entertain a mind so much at ease as yours.

Mar. O ! I love melancholy stories of all things.

Charles. But mine, madam, can't be told, unless I give my life into your power.

Mar. O lud ! you have not done anybody a mischief, I hope.

Charles. I never did a private injury ; if I have done a public wrong, I'm sure it might, in me at least, be called an honest error.

Mar. Pray whom did you serve before you lived with the doctor ?

Charles. I was not born to serve ; and had not an unfortunate education ruined me, might have now appeared, like what I am by birth, a gentleman.

Mar. I am surprised ! your education, say you, ruin you ? Lord ! I am concerned for you. Pray let me know your story ; and if any services are in my power, I am sure you may command them.

Charles. Such soft compassion, from so fair a bosom, o'erpays the worst that can attend my owning what I am.

Mar. O your servant—but pray let's hear.

Charles. My father's elder brother, madam, was a gentleman of

an ancient family in the North, who having then no child himself begged me from my nurse's arms, to be adopted as his own, with an assurance, too, of making me his heir; to which my father (then alas! in the infancy of his fortune) easily consented. This uncle being himself secretly disaffected to the Government, gave me, of course, in my education, the same unhappy prejudices, which since have ended in the ruin of us both.

Mar. Then you were bred a Roman Catholic.

Charles. No, madam; but I own in principles of very little difference, which I imbibed chiefly from this doctor; he having been five years my governor. As I grew up, my father's merit had raised his fortune under the present Government; and fearing I might be too far fixed in principles against it, desired me from my uncle home again; but I, as I then thought myself bound in gratitude, excused my going in terms of duty to my father, whom since, alas! I too justly have provoked ever to hope a reconciliation. I saw too late my folly, and had no defence against his anger, but by artfully confirming him in a belief that I had perished with my uncle in the late Rebellion.

Mar. Bless us! what do you mean? You were not actually in it, I hope!

Charles. I can't disown the guilt—but since the Royal mercy has been refused to none that frankly have confessed with penitence their crime (which from my heart I most sincerely do) in that is all my hope. My youth and education is all th' excuse I plead; if they deserve no pity, I am determined to throw off my disguise, and bow me to the hand of justice.

Mar. Poor creature! Lord! I can't bear it. [With concern.]

Charles. But then, unknown and friendless as I am, to whom, alas! can I apply for succour! [Weeps.]

Mar. O Lord! I'll serve you, depend upon it; my brother shall have no rest till he gets your pardon.

Charles. Your kind compassion, madam, has prevented what, if I durst, I should have mentioned. I hope, too, I shall personally deserve his favour; if not, your generous inclination to have saved me, even in my last despair of life, will give my heart a joy.

Mar. Lord! The poor unfortunate boy loves me, too; what shall I do with him? But, Mr. Charles, pray, once more, to your story—what was it that really drew you into the Rebellion?

Charles. This doctor, madam, who, as he is now your father's, was then my uncle's bosom counsellor: 'Twas his insidious tongue that painted it to us as an incumbent duty, on which the welfare of our souls depended; he warmed us, too, into such a weak belief of vile reports, as infamy should blush to mention. We were assured that half the churches here in town were lying all in sacrilegious ruins; which since, I found, maliciously was meant, even of those that are magnificently rising from their new foundations!

Mar. But pray, while you were in arms how did the doctor dispose of himself?

Charles. He !—went with us, madam ; none so active in the front of resolution, till danger came to face him ; then, indeed, a friendly fever seized him, which, on the first alarm of the King's forces marching towards Preston, gave him a cold pretence to leave the town ; in the defence of which my uncle lost his life, and I my only friend, with all my long-fed hopes of fortune.

Mar. Poor wretch ! but how came you to avoid being prisoner ?

Charles. Upon our surrender of the place, I bribed a townsman to employ me as his servant, in a backward working-house, where, from my youth and change of habit, I passed without suspicion till the whole affair was over. But then, alas ! whither to turn I knew not. My life grew now no more my care ; perish I saw I must, whether as a criminal, or a beggar, was my only choice.

Mar. O Lord ! tell me quickly how you came hither.

Charles. In this despair I wandered up to London, where I scarce knew one mortal, but some few friends in prison. What could I do ? I ventured even thither for my safety ; where 'twas my fortune first to see your father, madam, distributing relief to several. He knew my uncle well ; and, being informed of my condition, he charitably took me home ; and here has ever since concealed me as a menial servant to the Doctor, the detestation of whose vile, dishonest practices at last have waked me to a sense of all my blinded errors, of which this writing is his least of sordid instances.

[Gives it to MARIA.]

Mar. You frighten me ; pray what are the purposes of it ? 'Tis neither signed nor sealed.

Charles. No, madam, therefore to prevent it by this timely notice, was my business here with you. Your father gave it the Doctor first to show his counsel, who having since approved it, I understand this evening it will be executed.

Mar. But what is it ?

Charles. It grants to Dr. Wolf in present four hundred pounds per annum, of which this very house is part ; and at your father's death invests him in the whole remainder of his free estate. For you, indeed, there is a charge of four thousand pounds upon it ; provided you marry only with the Doctor's consent ; if not, 'tis added to my lady's jointure. But your brother, madam, is, without conditions, utterly disinherited.

Mar. I am confounded. What will become of us ? My father now, I find, was serious. O this insinuating hypocrite !—let me see—ay—I will go this minute. Sir, dare you trust this in my hands for an hour only ?

Charles. Anything to serve you—my life's already in your hands.

Mar. And I dare secure it with my own—Hark ! they ring to dinner ; pray, sir, step in, say I am obliged to dine abroad, and whisper one of the footmen to get an hackney coach immediately ; then do you take a proper occasion to slip out after me to Mr. Double's chambers in the Temple, there I shall have time to talk

farther with you. You'll excuse my hurry—Here, Betty, my scarf, and a mask. *[Exit MARIA.]*

Charles. What does my fortune mean me? She'll there talk farther with me! Of what? What will she talk of? O my heart! methought she looked at parting, too, as kindly conscious of some obligation to me. And then how soft, how amiably tender was her pity of my fortune. But O! I rave! keep down my vain aspiring thoughts, and to my lost condition level all my hopes.

Rather content with pity, let me live,
Than hope for more than she resolves to give.

[Exit.]

ACT III.

MARIA and BETTY, *taking off her Scarf, &c.*

Mar. Has any one been to speak with me, Betty?

Betty. Only Mr. Heartly, madam. He said he would call again, and bid his servant stay below to give him notice when you came home.

Mar. You don't know what he wanted?

Betty. No, madam, he seemed very uneasy at your being abroad.

Mar. Well—go, and lay up those things.—*[Exit BETTY.]* Ten to one, but his wise head now has found out something to be jealous of; if he lets me see it, I shall be sure to make him infinitely easy.—Here he comes.

Enter HEARTLY.

Hear. Your humble servant, madam.

Man. Your servant, sir.

[Gravely.]
[Gravely.]

Hear. You have been abroad, I hear.

Mar. Yes, and now, I am come home, you see?

Hear. You seem to turn upon my words, madam: is there anything particular in them?

Mar. As much as there is in my being abroad, I believe.

Hear. Might not I say you had been abroad, without giving offence?

Mar. And might not I as well say, I was come home, without your being so grave upon't?

Hear. Do you know anything should make me grave?

Mar. I know, if you are so, I am the worst person in the world you could possibly show it to.

Hear. Nay, I don't suppose you do anything you won't justify.

Mar. O! then I find I have done something you think I can't justify.

Hear. I don't say that neither—perhaps I am in the wrong in what I have said; but I have been so often used to ask pardon for your being in the wrong, that I am resolved henceforth never to rely on the insolent evidence of my own senses.

Mar. You don't know, now, perhaps, that I think this pretty smart speech of yours is very dull; but since that's a fault you can't help. I will not take it ill. Come now, be as sincere on your side,

and tell me seriously—is not what real business I had abroad the very thing you want to be made easy in ?

Hear. If I thought you would make me easy, I would own it.

Mar. Now we come to the point—to-morrow morning, then, I give you my word to let you know it all, till when there is a necessity for its being a secret, and I insist upon your believing it.

Hear. But pray, madam, what am I to do with my private imagination in the meantime, that is not in my power to confine ; and sure you won't be offended if, to avoid the tortures that may give me, I beg you'll trust me with the secret now.

Mar. Don't press me, for positively I will not.

Hear. Cannot had been a kinder term.—Is my disquiet of so little moment to you ?

Mar. Of none, while your disquiet dares not trust the assurances I have given you ; if you expect I should confide in you for life, don't let me see you dare not take my word for a day ; and if you are wise, you'll think so fair a trial of your faith a favour.

Hear. If you intend it such, it is a favour ; if not, 'tis something—so—come let's waive the subject.

Mar. With all my heart. Have you seen my brother lately ?

Hear. Yes, madam, and he tells me, it seems, the Doctor is the man your father has resolved upon.

Mar. 'Tis so ; nay, and what will more surprise you, he leaves me only to the choice of him, or of no fortune.

Hear. And may I, without offence, beg leave to know what resolutions, madam, you have taken upon it ?

Mar. I have not taken any ; I do not know what to do ! What would you advise me to ?

Hear. I advise you to ? Nay, you are in the right to make it a question.

Mar. He says he'll settle all his estate upon him too.

Hear. O, take it, take it, to be sure ; it's the fittest match in the world. You can't do a wiser thing certainly.

Mar. 'Twill be as wise, at least, as the ways you take to prevent it.

Hear. I find, madam, I am not to know what you intend to do ; and I suppose I am to be easy at that too ?

Mar. When I intend to marry him, I shall not care whether you are easy or no.

Hear. If your indifference to me were a proof of your inclination to him, the gentleman need not despair.

Mar. Very well, sir, I'll endeavour to take your advice, I promise you.

Hear. O, that won't cost you much trouble, I daresay, madam.

Mar. About as much, I suppose, as it cost you to give it me.

Hear. Upon my word, madam, I gave it purely to oblige you.

Mar. Then to return your civility, the least I can do is to take it.

Hear. Is't possible ? How can you torture me with this indifference ?

Mar. Why do you insult me with such a barefaced jealousy ?

Hear. Is it a crime to be concerned for what becomes of you? Has not your father openly declared against me, in favour of my rival? How is it possible, at such a time, not to have a thousand fears? What though they all are false and groundless, are they not still the effect of love alarmed, and anxious to be satisfied? I have an open, artless heart, that cannot bear disguises; but when 'tis grieved, in spite of me, 'twill show it.—Pray pardon me, but when I am told you went out in the utmost hurry with some writings to a lawyer, and took the Doctor's own servant with you, even in the very hour your father had proposed him as your husband!—Good Heaven! what am I to think? Can I—must I, suppose my senses fail me? If I have eyes, have ears, and have a heart, must it be still a crime to think I see and hear—yet by my torments feel I love?

Mar. [*aside.*] Well, I own it looks ill-natured now, not to show him some concern—but then this jealousy—I must and will get the better of.

Hear. Speak, Maria, is still my jealousy a crime?

Mar. If you still insist on it, as a proof of love, then I must tell you, sir, 'tis of that kind that only slighted hearts are pleased with; when I am so reduced, then I, perhaps, may bear it.—The fact you charge me with I grant is true. I have been abroad, as you say; but still let appearances look ne'er so pointing, while there is a possibility in nature that what I have done may be innocent, I won't bear a look that tells me to my face you dare suspect me. If you have doubts, why don't you satisfy them before you see me? Can you suppose that I'm to stand confounded as a criminal before you? How despicable a figure must a woman make to bear but such a moment. Come, come, there's nothing shows so low a mind as these grave and insolent jealousies. The man that's capable of ever seeing a woman after he believes her false, is capable on her submission and a little flattery, were she really false, poorly to forgive and bear it.

Hear. You won't find me, madam, of so low a spirit, but since I see your tyranny arises from your mean opinion of me, 'tis time to be myself, and disavow your power; you use it now beyond my bearing; not only impose on me to disbelieve my senses, but do it with such an imperious air, as if my honest, manly reason were your slave, and this poor grovelling frame that follows you durst show no signs of life but what you deign to give it.

Mar. Oh! you are in the right—go on—suspect me still, believe the worst you can—'tis all true—I don't justify myself. Why do you trouble me with your complaints! If you are master of that manly reason you have boasted, give me a manly proof of it—at once resume your liberty, despise me, go—go off in triumph now, and let me see you scorn the woman whose vile, o'erbearing falsehood, would insult your senses.

Hear. O heaven! is this the end of all? Are then those tender protestations you have made me (for such I thought them), when with the softest, kind reluctance your rising blushes gave me some-

thing more than hope—What all—O Maria ! All but come to this ?

Mar. [*aside*] O lud ! I am growing silly ; if I hear on, I shall tell him everything ; 'tis but another struggle, and I shall conquer it.—So, so, you are not gone, I see.

Hear. Do you then wish me gone, madam ?

Mar. Your manly reason will direct you.

Hear. This is too much—my heart can bear no more. O !—what ? am I rooted here ? 'Tis but a pang, and I am free for ever.

Enter CHARLES, with two writings.

Mar. At last I am relieved ! Well, Mr. Charles, is it done ?

Charles. I did not stir from his desk, madam, till it was entirely finished.

Mar. Where's the original !

Charles. This is it, madam.

Mar. Very well, that you know you must keep ; but come, we must lose no time, we will examine this in the next room. Now I feel for him.—[*Aside*.] [*Exit MARIA, with CHARLES.*

Hear. O rage ! rage ! this is not to be borne—she's gone, she's lost, sordidly has sold herself to fortune, and I must now forget her. Hold, if possible, let me cool a moment. Interest ! No, that could not tempt her. She knows I am master of a larger fortune than there her utmost hopes can give her ; that on her own conditions she may be mine. But what's this secret treaty then within ! what's doing there ? who can resolve that riddle ?—and yet perhaps, like other riddles, when 'tis explained, nothing may seem so easy. But why, again, might she not trust me too with the secret ! That ! that entangles all afresh, and sets me on the rack of jealousy.

Enter COLONEL.

Col. How now, Frank ; what, in a rapture ?

Mar. Prithee, pardon me, I am unfit to talk with you.

Col. What, is Maria in her airs again ?

Hear. I know not what she is.

Col. Do you know where she is !

Hear. Retired this moment to her chamber, with the Doctor's servant.

Col. Why, thou art not jealous of the doctor, I hope ?

Hear. Perhaps she'll be less reserved to you, and tell you wherein I have mistaken her.

Col. Poor Frank, thou art a perfect Sir Martin in thy amours ; every plot I lay upon my sister's inclination for thee, thou art sure to ruin by thy own unfortunate conduct.

Hear. I own I have too little temper, and too much real passion for a modish lover.

Col. Come, come, prithee be easy once more ; I'll undertake for you, if you'll fetch a cool turn in the park, upon Constitution Hill, in less than half-an-hour I'll come to you.

T

Hear. Dear Tom, thou art a friend indeed ! O, I have a thousand things—but you shall find me there. *[Exit HEARTLY.]*

Col. Poor Frank ! now has he been taking some honest pains to make himself miserable.

Enter MARIA, and CHARLES.

How now, sister, what have you done to Heartly ? The poor fellow looks as if he had killed your parrot.

Mar. Pshaw ! you know him well enough ; I have only been setting him a love-lesson ; it a little puzzles him to get through it at first, but he'll know it all by to-morrow ; you will be sure to be in the way, Mr. Charles ?

Charles. Madam, you may depend upon me ; I have my full instructions. *[Exit CHARLES.]*

Col. O ho ! There's the business then, and it seems Heartly was not to be trusted with it ; ha ! ha ! and prithee what is this mighty secret, that's transacting between Charles and you ?

Mar. That's what he would have known, indeed ; but you must know, I don't think it proper to let you tell him neither, for all your sly manner of asking.

Col. O ! pray take your own time, dear madam ; I am not in haste to know, I can assure you ; I came about another affair—our design upon the doctor. Now, while my father takes his nap after dinner would be the properest time to put it in execution ; prithee go to my lady, and persuade her to it this moment.

Mar. Why won't you go with me ?

Col. No, I'll place myself unknown to her in this passage ; for, should I tell her I design to overhear him, she might be scrupulous.

Mar. That's true ; but hold, on second thoughts, you shall know part of this affair between Charles and me ; nay, I give you leave to tell it Heartly too, on some conditions ; 'tis true I did design to have surprised you, but now—my mind's altered, that's enough.

Col. Ay, for any mortal's satisfaction ; but here comes my lady.

Mar. Away then to your post ; but let me see you, when this affair is over.

Col. I'll be with you.

[Exit COLONEL.]

Enter LADY WOODVIL.

Mar. Well, madam, has your ladyship considered my brother's proposal about the Doctor ?

Lady W. I have, child, and am convinced it ought not to be delayed a moment. I have just sent to speak with him here.—Sir John, too, presses me to give him a hearing upon your account ; but must I play a treacherous part now, and instead of persuading you to the Doctor, even persuade the Doctor against you.

Mar. Dear madam, don't be so nice ; if wives were never to dissemble, what would become of many wilful husbands' happiness ?

Lady W. Nay that's true too.

Mar. I'd give the world now, methinks, to see this solemn interview; sure there can't be a more ridiculous image than unlawful love peeping his sly head out from under the cloak of sanctity! O! that I were in your ladyship's place, I would lead that dancing blood of his such a profane courrant. Your wise fellows make the rarest fools, too; but your ladyship will make a rogue of him, and that will do our business at present.

Lady W. If he makes himself one, 'tis his own fault.

Mar. Dear madam, one moment's truce with the prude; I beg you, don't start at his first declaration, but let him go on till he shows the very bottom of his ugly heart.

Lady W. I'll warrant you, I'll give a good account of him—here he comes.

Mar. Then I hope, madam, you will give me leave to be com-mode, and steal off.

Lady W. Very well.

[*Exit MARIA, and enter DOCTOR.*]

Doct. I am told, madam, you design me the happiness of your commands; I am proud you think me worthy of them in any sort.

Lady W. Please to sit, sir.

Doct. Did not Sir John inform you, too, that I had desired a private conference with your ladyship?

Lady W. He did, sir.

Doct. 'Tis then by his permission we are thus happily alone.

Lady W. True, and 'tis on that account I wanted to advise with you.

Doct. Well, but, dear lady, ah!—[*sighing.*] You can't conceive the joyousness I feel, in this so unexpected interview—ah! ah!—I have a thousand friendly things to say to you—ah! ah!—and how stands your precious health? Is your naughty cold abated yet? I have scarce closed my eyes these two nights, with my concern for you, and every watchful interval has sent a thousand sighs and prayers to heaven for your recovery.

Lady W. Your charity was too far concerned for me.

Doct. Ah! don't say so, don't say so—you merit more than mortal man can do for you.

Lady W. Indeed, you over-rate me.

Doct. I speak it from my soul! indeed! indeed! indeed I do.

[*Presses her hand.*]

Lady W. O dear! you hurt my hand, sir.

Doct. Impute it to my zeal, and want of words to express my heart; ah! I would not harm you for the world; no, bright creature, 'tis the whole business of my soul to—

Lady W. But to our affair, sir.

Doct. Ah! thou heavenly woman! [*Laying his hand on her knee.*]

Lady W. Your hand need not be there, sir.

Doct. Ah! I was admiring the softness of this silk, madam.

Lady W. Ay, but I am ticklish.

Doct. They are indeed come to a prodigious perfection in this manufacture. How wonderful is human art! Here it disputes

the prize with Nature—that all this soft and gaudy lustre, should be wrought from the poor labours of a worm! [*Stroking it.*]

Lady W. But our business, sir, is upon another subject. Sir John informs me, that he thinks himself under no obligation to Mr. Heartly, and therefore resolves to give you Maria. Now pray be sincere, and let me know what your real intentions are?

Doct. Is it possible! Can you, divine perfection, be still a stranger to my real thoughts? Has no one action of my life informed you better? Since I must plainly speak them then, Maria's but a feint, a blind to screen my real thoughts from shrewd suspicion's eye, and shield your spotless fame from worldly censure. Could you then think 'twas for Maria's sake, your balls, assemblies, and your toilet, visits have been restrained? Would I have urged Sir John to make that fence to enclose a butterfly? No, soft, and serious Excellence, your virtues only were the object of my care. I could not bear to see the gay, the young, and the inconstant daily basking in your diffusive beams of beauty, without a secret grudge, I might say envy, even, of such insect's happiness.

Lady W. Well, sir, I take all this, as I suppose you intended it, for my good, my spiritual welfare.

Doct. Indeed, I meant you serious, cordial service.

Lady W. I dare say you did; you are above the low and momentary views of this world.

Doct. Ah! I should be so—and yet, alas! I find this mortal clothing of my soul is made like other men's, of sensual flesh and blood, and has its frailties.

Lady W. We all have those; but yours, I know, are well corrected by your divine and virtuous contemplations.

Doct. And yet our knowledge of eternal beauties do not restrain us wholly from the love of all that's mortal. Beauty here, 'tis true must die, but while it lives 'twas given us to admire, to wake the sluggish heart, and charm the sensible. At the first sight of you I felt unusual transports in my soul, and trembled at the guilt that might ensue; but on reflection found my flame received a sanction from your goodness, and might be reconciled with virtue; on this I chased my slanderous fears, let in the harmless passion at my eyes, and gave up all my heart to love.

Col. [behind.] Indeed! so warm, Sir Roger; but I shall cool your passion with a witness. [*Exit.*]

Lady W. These gay professions, sir, show more the courtier than the zealot; nor could I think a mind so fortified as yours could have been open to such vain temptations.

Doct. What bosom can be proof against such artillery of love? I may resist, call all my prayers, my fastings, tears and penance to my aid, but yet, alas! these have not made an angel of me: I am still but man; virtue may strive, but nature will be uppermost. Permit me then on this fair shrine to pay my vows, and offer up a heart—

Lady W. Hold, sir, you've said enough to put you in my power:

suppose I now should let my husband, sir, your benefactor, know the favour you designed him. *[She rises.]*

Doct. You cannot be so cruel?

Lady W. Nor will, on one condition.

Doct. Name it.

Lady W. That instantly you renounce all claim and title to Maria, and use your utmost interest with Sir John to give her, with her full fortune, to Mr. Heartly. If you are wise, consider on't.

[SIR JOHN and COLONEL behind.]

[The DOCTOR, turning accidentally, sees them.]

Doct. Ha ! the Colonel there ! his father with him too ! here may have been some treachery ; what's to be done ? *[Aside.]*

Col. Now, sir, let your eyes convince you. *[Apart.]*

Sir John. They do, that yours, sir, have deceived you ; all this I knew of. *[Apart.]*

Col. How, sir ! *[Apart.]*

Sir John. Observe, and be convinced.

Doct. I have it. *[Musing.]*

Lady W. *[to the DOCTOR.]* Methinks this business needs not, sir, so long a pause.

Doct. Madam, I cannot easily give up such honest hopes.

Lady W. Honest !

Doct. Perhaps my years are thought unequal to my flame, but, lady, those were found no strong objection 'twixt Sir John and you ; and can you blame me then for following so sure a guide in the same youthful path to happiness.

Lady W. Is this your resolution then ?

Col. Will you let him go on, sir ? *[Apart.]*

Sir John. Yes, sir, to confound your slander. *[Apart.]*

Col. Monstrous ! *[Apart.]*

Doct. Can you suppose my heart less capable of love than his ? Is it for me to push the blessing from me too ? For though my flame has been of long duration, my conscious want of merit kept it still concealed, till his good nature brought it to this blest occasion ; and can you then, so authorized, refuse your friendly pity to my sufferings ? One word from you completes my joy ; in you, madam, is my only hope, my fear, my ease, my pain, my torment, or my happiness ; Maria ! O ! Maria !

Col. Confusion !

Sir John. *[coming forward with the COLONEL.]* Now, vile detractor of all virtue, is your outrageous malice yet confounded ? Did I not tell you, too, he only made an interest here to gain your sister ?

Col. His devil has outreached me. *[Aside.]*

Sir John. Is this your rank detection of his treachery !

Doct. Sir John, I did not see you, sir, I doubt you are come too soon, I have not yet prevailed with her. *[Aside to him.]*

Sir John. Ah ! good man, be not concerned ; your trouble shall be shorter for't ; I'll force her to compliance.

Lady W. What have you done—your impatience has ruined all.

Col. I see it now too late.

Sir John. Now, sir! will your base prejudice of party never be at rest? Am I to be still thought partial, blind, and obstinate to favour so much injured virtue; if thou art a man not lost to conscience, or to honour, then like a man repair this wrong, confess the rancour of thy vile suspicion, and throw thee at his feet for pardon.

Doct. What mean you, sir?

Lady W. [*aside.*] While he is in this temper, he will not easily be undeceived—I've yet an after-game to play, till when 'tis best to leave him in his error.

[*Exit* LADY WOODVIL.]

Sir John. What! mute! defenceless! hardened in thy malice?

Col. I scorn the imputation, sir, and with the same repeated honesty avow (however his cunning may have changed appearances) that you are still deceived; that all I told you, sir, was true; these eyes, these ears, were witnesses of his audacious love, without the mention of my sister's name, directly, plainly, grossly tending to abuse the honour of your bed.

Sir John. Audacious monster! were not your own senses evidence against your frontless accusation? I see your aim; wife, children, servants, all are bent against him, and think to weary me by groundless clamours to discard him; but all shall not do; your malice on your own vile heads; to me it but the more endears him; either submit, and ask his pardon for this wrong—

Doct. Good sir!

Sir John. Or this instant leave my sight, my house, my family for ever.

Doct. What means this rashness, sir! on my account it must not be; what would the world report of it? I grant it possible he loves me not, but you must grant it too as possible he might mistake me!—it must be so. He is too much your son to do his enemy a wilful injury. If he, I say, suppose my converse with your lady criminal, to accuse me then, was but the error of his virtue, not his baseness; you ought to love him, thank him for such watchful care. Was it for him to see, as he believed, your honour in so foul a danger, and stand concernless by? The law of Heaven, of nature, and of filial duty, all obliged him to alarm your vengeance, and detect the villainy.

Sir John. O miracle of charity!

Doct. Come, come, such breaches must not be betwixt so good a son and father; forget, forgive, embrace him, cherish him, and let me bless the hour I was the occasion of so sweet a reconciliation.

Sir John. I cannot bear such goodness! O sink me not into the earth with shame. Hear this, perverse and reprobate! O! couldst thou wrong such more than mortal virtue!

Col. Wrong him!—the hardened impudence of this painted charity—

Sir John. Peace, monster—

Col. Is of a blacker, deeper dye than the great devil himself in all his triumphs over innocence ever wore.

Sir John. O graceless infidel!

Col. No, sir, though I would hazard life to save you from the ruin he misleads you to; could die to reconcile my duty to your favour; yet on the terms that villain offers, 'tis merit to refuse it. I glory in the disgrace your errors give me. But, sir, I'll trouble you no more?—to-day is his—to-morrow may be mine.

[*Exit* COLONEL.]

Doct. I did not think he had had so hard a nature.

Sir John. O, my good Lord, your charitable heart discovers not the rancour that's in his; but what better can be hoped for from a wretch so swelled with spleen, and rage of party.

Doct. No, no, sir, I am the thorn that galls him; 'tis me, 'tis me he hates. He thinks I stand before him in your favour; and 'tis not fit indeed I should do so; for, fallen as he is, he's still your son, and I, alas! an alien, an intruder here, and ought in conscience to retire, and heal these hapless breaches in your family.

Sir John. What means your Lordship?

Doct. But I'll remove this eyesore—Here, Charles!

Enter CHARLES.

Sir John. For goodness sake.

Doct. Bring me that writing I gave you to lay up this morning.

Charles. Now fortune favours us.—[*Aside.*] [*Exit* CHARLES.]

Sir John. Make haste, good Charles; it shall be signed this moment.

Doct. Not for the world; 'twas not to that end I sent for it, but to refuse your kind intentions; for with your children's curses, sir, I dare not, must not take it.

Sir John. Nay, good my Lord, you carry it now too far; my daughter is not wronged by it; but if not obstinate, may still be happy; and for my wicked son, shall he then heir my lands, to propagate more miserable schismatics? No; let him depend on you, whom he has wronged; perhaps in time he may reflect upon his father's justice; be reconciled to your rewarded virtues, and reform his fatal errors.

Re-enter CHARLES with a writing.

Doct. That would be indeed a blessing.

Sir John. If heaven should at last reclaim him, the power to right him still is yours; in you I know he yet would find a fond forgiving father.

Doct. The imagination of so blest an hour softens me to a tenderness I can't support.

Sir John. O, the dear, good man! come, come, let's in to execute this deed.

Doct. Will you then force me to accept this trust? For, call it what you will, with me, it shall never be more than such.

Sir John. Let that depend upon the conduct of my son.

Doct. Well, sir, since yet it may prevent his ruin, I consent.

So sweet a hope must all my fears control ;
I take the trust, as guardian to his soul.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

MARIA and CHARLES.

Mar. You were a witness then ?

Charles. I saw it signed, sealed, and delivered, madam.

Mar. And all passed without the least suspicion ?

Charles. Sir John signed it with such earnestness, and the doctor received it with such a seeming reluctance, that neither had the curiosity to examine a line of it.

Mar. Well, Mr. Charles, whether it succeeds to our ends or not, we have still the same obligations to you. You saw with what a friendly warmth my brother heard your story, and I don't in the least doubt his success in your affair at Court.

Charles. What I have done, my duty bound me to. But pray, madam, give me leave, without offence, to ask you one innocent question.

Mar. Freely, sir.

Charles. Have you never suspected, then, that in all this affair I have had some secret, stronger motive to it, than barely duty ?

Mar. Yes ; but have you been in no apprehensions I should discover that motive.

[*Gravely.*]

Charles. Pray, pardon me ; I see already I have gone too far.

Mar. Not at all ; it loses you no merit with me, nor is it in my nature to use any one ill that loves me, unless I loved that one again, then indeed there might be danger. Come, don't look grave, my inclinations to another shall not hinder me paying every one what's due to their merit ; I shall, therefore, always think myself obliged to treat your misfortunes and your modesty with the utmost tenderness.

Charles. By the dear, soft ease you have given my heart, I never hoped for more.

Mar. Then I'll give you a great deal more, and to show my particular good opinion of you, I'll do you a favour, Mr. Charles, I never did any man since I was born. I'll be sincere with you.

Charles. Is it then possible you can have loved another, to whom you never were sincere ?

Mar. Alas ! you are but a novice in the passion. Sincerity is a dangerous virtue, and often surfeits what it ought to nourish ; therefore I take more pains to make the man I love believe I slight him, than (if possible) I would to convince you of my esteem and friendship.

Charles. Be but sincere in that, madam, and I can't complain.

Mar. Nay, I'll give you a proof of it—I'll show you all the good-nature you can desire ; you shall make what love to me you please now ; but then I'll tell you the consequence, I shall certainly be pleased with it, and that will flatter you till I do you a mischief. Now do you think me sincere ?

Charles. I scarce consider that, but I'm sure you are agreeable.

Mar. Why, look you there now ! do you consider that a woman had as gladly be thought agreeable as handsome ? And how can you suppose, from one of your sense, that I am not pleased with being told so ?

Charles. Was ever temper so enchanting ?

Mar. Or vanity more venial ! I'm pleased with you. [*Smiling.*]

Charles. Distracting ! sure never was despair administered with a hand so gentle.

Mar. So, now you have convinced me, I have a good understanding too. Why I shall certainly have the better opinion of yours for finding it out now.

Charles. Your good opinion's what I aim at.

Mar. Ay, but the more I give it to you, the better you'll think of me still ; and then I must think the better of you again, and then you the better of me upon that too ; and so at last I shall think seriously, and you'll begin to think ill of me. But I hope, Mr. Charles, your good sense will prevent all this.

Charles. I see my folly now, and blush at my presumption ; but yet to cure my weaning heart, and reconcile me to my doom, be yet sincere, and satisfy one sickly longing of my soul.

Mar. To my power, command me.

Charles. O ! tell me then the requisites I want, and what's the secret charm that has preferred my rival to your heart.

Mar. Come then, be cheerful, and I'll answer like a friend. The gentleness and modesty of your temper would make with mine but an unequal mixture ; with you I should be ungovernable—not know myself : your compliance would undo me. I am by nature vain, thoughtless, wild, and wilful ; therefore ask a higher spirit to control and lead me. For whatever outward airs I give myself, I am within convinced, a woman makes a very wrong figure in happiness, that does not think superiority best becomes her husband. But what's yet more, though I confess you have qualities uncommon in your sex, and such as ought to warm a heart to love, yet here you come too late ; compassion's all within my power ; and I know you cannot but have seen I am under obligations I need not explain to you.

Charles. I am satisfied. You treat me with so kind and gentle a concern that I must submit to it.

Mar. [*apart.*] Well ! when all's done, he's a pretty fellow ; and the first, sure, that ever heard reason against himself with so good an understanding.

Enter a SERVANT with a Letter to CHARLES.

Serv. Sir, the Colonel ordered me to give this into your own hands.

Mar. From my brother?—Where is he?

Serv. I left him, madam, at the Secretary's office with one Sir Charles Trueman, and Mr. Heartly. *[Exit SERVANT.]*

Charles. Ha! my father! O! Heaven, 'tis his hand too! Now I tremble!

Mar. Come, sir, take heart; I daresay there's good news in't, and I should be glad to hear it.—But no ceremony; pray read to yourself first.

Charles. Since you command me, madam. *[Reads to himself.]*

Maria. *[apart.]* Lord! how one may live and learn! I could not have believed that modesty in a young fellow could have been so amiable a virtue. And though, I own, there is I know not what of dear delight in indulging one's vanity with them, yet, upon serious reflection, we must confess that truth and sincerity have a thousand charms beyond it. And I now find more pleasure in my self-denying endeavours to make this poor creature easy, than ever I took in humbling the airs and assurance of a man of quality. I believe I had as good confess all this to Heartly, and even make up the bustle with him too. But then he will so tease one for instances of real inclination. O God! I can't bear the thought on't. And yet we must come together too.—Well! Nature knows the way to be sure, and so I'll even trust to her for't. Bless me! what's the matter? you seem concerned, sir. *[To CHARLES, wiping his tears.]*

Charles. I am indeed, but 'tis with joy! O, madam! my father's reconciled to me. This letter is from him.

Mar. Pray let's hear.

Charles. *[reading.]*

Dear Charles,—

This day, by Colonel Woodvil, I received the joyful news of your being yet alive, and well, though that's but half my comfort. He has assured me, too, you have renounced those principles that made me think your death my happiness. The services you have intended his family, and may do the Government, in your just detection of a traitor that would ruin both, have been so well received at Court, and so generously represented there by the Colonel and Mr. Heartly, that they have obtained an order for your pardon; which I now stay the passing of, before I throw my arms about you, that I may leave no doubt or fear behind to interrupt the fulness of my joy. I am informed, that in revealing yourself to a certain fair lady, you have let fall some words that show you have an innocent, though hopeless passion for her. Your youth excuses what is past; but now consider how far you owe your life to Mr. Heartly. I therefore charge you, on my blessing, to give up every idle thought of love that may interrupt his happiness, or abate the merit of what you've

done to deserve the pardon of your Sovereign, or of your affectionate, forgiving father,—CHARLES TRUEMAN.

Mar. I am overjoyed at your good fortune.

Charles. You, madam, are the source of all ; but I am now unfit to thank you. [Weeps.]

Mar. You owe me nothing, sir ; success was all I hoped for.

Charles. Pray excuse me. It would be rudeness to trouble you with the tender thoughts this must give a heart obliged like mine.

[Exit CHARLES.]

Mar. Poor creature ! how full his honest heart is ? What early vicissitudes of fortune has he run through ? Well ! this was handsomely done of Heartly, considering what he had felt upon his account, to be so concerned for his pardon.

Enter LADY WOODVIL.

Lady W. Dear Maria, what will become of us ? The tyranny of this subtle priest is insupportable : he has so fortified himself in Sir John's opinion by this last misconduct of your brother, that I begin to lose my usual power with him.

Mar. Pray explain, madam.

Lady W. In spite of all I could urge, he is this minute bringing the Doctor to make his addresses to you.

Mar. I am glad on't ; for the beast must come like a bear to the stake, I'm sure ; he knows I shall bait him.

Lady W. No, no, he presses it, to keep Sir John still blind to his wicked design upon me. Therefore, I came to give you notice, that you might be prepared to receive him.

Mar. I am obliged to your Ladyship. Our meeting will be a tender scene, no doubt on't.

Lady W. You have heard, I suppose, what an extravagant settlement your father has signed to.

Mar. Yes, madam ; but I'm glad your Ladyship's like to be a gainer by it, however ; for when I marry it will be without the Doctor's consent, depend upon't.

Lady W. No, child, I did not come into Sir John's family with a design to injure it, or make any one of it my enemy. Whenever that four thousand pounds falls into my hands, you'll find it as firmly yours as if it had been given you without that odious condition.

Mar. Madam, I think myself as much obliged by this kind intention as the performance ; but if your Ladyship could yet find a way to prove this hypocrite a private villain to my father, I am not without hopes the public will soon have enough against him to give a turn to the settlement.

Lady W. But suppose that fails, what will become of your poor brother ?

Mar. But, dear madam, I cannot suppose this fellow must not be hanged at last ; and then, you know, the same honest hand that ties him up releases the settlement.

Lady W. Not absolutely, neither ; for this very house is given him in present, which, though that were to be the end of him, would then be forfeited.

Mar. Why, then my brother must even petition the Government. There have been precedents of the same favour, madam. If not, he must pay for his blundering, and lay his next plot deeper, I think.

Lady W. I am glad you are so cheerful upon it, however ; it looks as if you had something *in petto* to depend upon. But here comes the Doctor.

Enter SIR JOHN, with the DOCTOR.

Sir John. Daughter, since you have the happiness to be thought amiable in the eye of this good man, I expect you give him an instant opportunity to improve it into an amity for life.

Mar. I hope, sir, I shall give him no occasion to alter his opinion of me.

Sir John. Why, that's well said ; come, sweetheart, we'll use no ceremony.

[*Exit SIR JOHN with LADY W.*

[*MARIA and the DOCTOR stand some time mute, in formal civilities, and a conscious contempt of each other.*

Mar. Please to sit, sir. What can the ugly cur say to me ? He seems a little puzzled. This puts me in mind of the tender interview between Lady Charlotte and Lord Hardy in the Funeral.

[*Aside.*

Doct. Look you, fair lady, not to make many words, I am convinced, notwithstanding your good father's favour, I am not the person you desire to be alone with, upon this occasion.

Mar. Your modesty—is pleased to be in the right, sir.

Doct. Humph ! if I don't flatter myself, you have always had a very ill opinion of me.

Mar. A worse, sir, of no mortal breathing.

Doct. Humph ! and it is likely it may be immovable.

Mar. No rock so firm.

Doct. Humph ! from these premises, then, I may reasonably conclude, you hate me heartily.

Mar. Most sincerely, sir.

Doct. Well ! there is, however, some merit in speaking truth ; therefore to be as just on my side, I ought, in conscience, to let you know that I have as cordial a contempt for you too.

Mar. Oh, fie ! you flatter me.

[*Affecting a blush.*

Doct. Indeed I don't ; you wrong your own imperfections to think so.

Mar. These words from any tongue but yours might shock me ; but coming from the only man I hate—they charm me.

Doct. Admirable ! there seems good sense in this. Have you never observed, madam, that sometimes the greatest discords raise the most agreeable harmony ?

Mar. Yes ; but what do you infer from thence ?

Doct. That while we still preserve this temper in our hate, a mutual benefit may rise from it.

Mar. O ! never fear me, sir ; I shall not fly out ; being convinced that nothing gives so sharp a point to one's aversion as good breeding, as, on the contrary, ill manners often hide a secret inclination.

Doct. Most accurately distinguished.—Well, madam, is there no project you can think of now, to turn this mutual aversion, as I said, into a mutual benefit.

Mar. None, that I know of, unless we were to marry for our mutual mortification.

Doct. What would you give, then, to avoid marrying me ?

Mar. My life, with joy, if death alone could shun you.

Doct. When you marry any other person my consent is necessary.

Mar. So, I hear, indeed. But pray, Doctor, tell me, how could your modesty receive so insolent a power, without putting my poor father out of countenance with your blushes ?

Doct. You overrate my prudence. I sought it not, but he would crowd it in among other obligations ; he is good-natured, and I could not shock him by a refusal. Would you have had me plainly tell him what a despicable opinion I had of his daughter ?

Mar. Or, rather, what a favourable one you had of his wife, sir ?

Doct. Humph ! You seem to lose your temper.

Mar. Why, do you suppose the whole family does not see it except my father ?

Doct. If you will keep your temper I have something to propose to you.

Mar. Your reproof is just ; but I only raised my voice to let you know I know you.

Doct. You might have spared your pains, it being of no consequence to my proposal what you think of me.

Mar. Not unlikely. Come, sir, I am ready to receive it.

Doct. In one word then—I take it for granted that you would marry Mr. Heartly. Am I right ?

Mar. Once in your life, you are.

Doct. Nay, no compliments ; let us be plain. Would you marry him ?

Mar. You are mighty nice, methinks——well—I would.

Doct. Then I won't consent to it. Now, if you have any proposal to make me—so—if not, our amour's at an end, and we part as civil enemies, as if we had been married this twelvemonth. Think of it.

Mar. [*aside.*] O the mercenary villain ! He wants to have a fellow-feeling, I find. What shall I do with him ? Bite him—pretend to comply—and make my advantage of it ?—Well, sir, I understand everything but the sum ; if we agree upon that it's a bargain.

Doct. Half.

Mar. What, two thousand pounds for your consent only?

Doct. Why, is not two thousand pounds worth two thousand pounds? Don't you actually get so much by it? Is not the half better than nothing? Come, come, say I have used you like a friend.

Mar. Nay, I think it is the only civil thing you have done since you came into the family.

Doct. Do you then make your advantage of it.

Mar. Why, as you say, Doctor, 'tis better than nothing. But how is my father to be brought into this?

Doct. Leave that to my management.

Mar. What security, though, do you expect for this money?

Doct. O, when I deliver my consent in writing, Heartly shall lay it me down in bank-bills.

Mar. Well, on one proviso, I'll undertake that too.

Doct. Name it.

Mar. Upon your immediately owning to my father that you are willing to give up your interest to Mr. Heartly.

Doct. Humph! Stay—I agree to it; you shall have proof of it this evening. But in the meantime, let me warn you too. Don't expect, after I have hinted what you desire to your father, to make your advantages now by betraying me to him. You know my power there; if you do, I can easily give it a counterturn. So discover what you please, I shall only pity you.

Mar. O, I shall not stand in my own light. I know your power and your conscience too well, dear Doctor.

Doct. Nay, I dare depend upon your being true to your own interest. Here comes your father; I will break it to him immediately. You'll prepare Mr. Heartly in the meantime.

Mar. Without fail.

Doct. I am satisfied.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir John. Well, sir, is my daughter prudent? has she at last a true and virtuous sense of happiness?

Doct. She understands me better than I hoped, sir.

Mar. Well said, Equivocation.

[*Aside.*

Doct. If you please, Sir John, we'll take a turn in the garden. I have something there to offer to you.

Sir John. With all heart, sir,—Maria, there's a toy for thee. Now thou art again my daughter. [*Gives her a ring.*] Come, sir, I wait on you.

[*Exeunt SIR JOHN and DOCTOR.*

Mar. What this fellow's original was, I know not; but by his conscience and cunning, he would make an admirable Jesuit.—Here comes my brother, and I hope with a good account of him.—Well! brother, what success?

Enter COLONEL.

Col. All that my honest heart could wish for—substantial affidavits ! that will puzzle him to answer. I have planted a messenger at the next door, who has a warrant in his pocket, when I give the word, to take him.

Mar. Why should not you do it immediately, he's now in the garden with my father ?

Col. No ; our seizing him now for treason, I am afraid won't convince my father of his villainy : my design is not only to get my father out of his hands, but to drive the pernicious principles he has instilled out of my father too.

Mar. That I doubt will be difficult.

Col. Not at all, if we can first prove him a private villain to him. My father's honesty will soon reflect, and may receive as sudden a turn as his credulity.

Mar. That's true again ; and I hope I am furnished with a new occasion to begin the alarm to him.

Col. Pray, what is't ?

Mar. Not to trouble you with particulars ; but, in short, I have agreed with the Doctor, that Heartly shall give him two thousand pounds for his consent ; without which, you know, by my father's late settlement, Heartly and I can never come together.

Col. And does the monster really insist upon't ?

Mar. Not only that, but even defies me to make an advantage of the discovery.

Col. One would think the villain suspects his footing in the family is but short-lived, he is in such haste to have his pennyworths out on't. But prithee, sister, what secret is this that you have yet behind in those writings that Charles brought to you ?

Mar. O ! that's what I can't yet tell you.

Col. Why, pray ?

Mar. Because, when you have done all you can, I am resolved to reserve some merit against him to myself.

Col. But why do you suppose I would not assist in it ?

Mar. You can't ; it's now too late.

Col. Pshaw ! this is rash, and ridiculous.

Mar. Ay, may be so ; I suppose Heartly will be of that opinion too ; but if he is you had better advise him to keep it to himself.

Col. You will have your obstinate way, I find.

Mar. It can't be worse than yours, I'm sure ; remember how you came off in your last project ; I know you meant well, but you are disinherited for all that.

Col. That's no surprise to me ; but I am ashamed, however.

Mar. By the way, what have you done with Heartly ? why is he not here ?

Col. He has been here, but you must excuse him ; he was obliged to call in haste for Charles, whom he took home with him in his own coach, where his father waited to receive him.

Mar. The poor boy by this time, then, has seen him. Sure their meeting must have been a moving sight ; I would give the world methinks for a true account of it.

Col. You'll have it from Heartly by and by ; 'tis at his house they meet. The father, Sir Charles Trueman, happened to be Heartly's intimate acquaintance.

Mar. Well ! I own Heartly has gained upon me by this.

Col. I am glad to hear that at least. But I must let my lady know what progress we have made in the Doctor's business, and beg her assistance to finish him. [Exit COLONEL.]

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Madam, Mr. Heartly.

Mar. Desire him to walk in.

Enter HEARTLY.

Hear. To find you thus alone, madam, was an happiness I did not expect from the temper of our last parting.

Mar. I should have been as well pleased now to have been thanked, as reproached for my good nature ; but you will be in the right, I find.

Hear. Indeed you took me wrong ; I literally meant, that I was afraid you would not so soon think I had deserved this favour.

Mar. Well, then, one of us has been in the wrong at least.

Hear. 'Twas I—I own it—more is not in my power ; all the amends that have been, I have made you : my very joy of seeing you has waited, till what you had at heart unasked, was perfected ; my own pardon was postponed, till I had secured one even for a rival's life, whom you so justly had compassionated.

Mar. Pooh ! but why would you say unasked now ? Don't you consider your doing it so is half the merit of the action ?—Lord ! you have no art ; you should have left me to have taken notice of that ; only imagine now, how kind and handsome an acknowledgment you have robbed me of ?

Hear. And yet how artfully you have paid it ? with what a wanton, charming ease you play upon my tenderness ?

Mar. Well, but was not you silly now ?

Hear. [gazing on her.] Come—you shall not be serious—you can't be more agreeable.

Mar. O ! but I am serious.

Hear. Then I'll be so—do you forgive me all ?

Mar. What. [Looking on her fan, as not hearing him.]

Hear. Are we friends, Maria ?

Mar. O Lord ! but you have told me nothing of poor Charles ; pray how did his father receive him ?

Hear. Must you needs know that, before you answer me ?

Mar. Lord, you are never well till you have talked one out of countenance.

Hear. Come, I won't be too particular, you shall answer nothing—give me but your hand only.

Mar. Pshaw! I won't pull off my glove, not I.

Hear. I'll take it as it is then.

Mar. Lord! there, there, eat it, eat it. [*Putting it awkwardly to him.*]

Hear. And so I could, by Heav'n.

[*Kisses it eagerly, and pulls off her glove.*]

Mar. O my glove! my glove! my glove!—Pooh! you are in a perfect storm! Lord! if you make such a rout with one's hand only, what would you do if you had one's heart!

Hear. That's impossible to tell; but you were asking me of Charles, madam.

Mar. O! ay, that's true! Well, now you are good again—come, tell me all that affair, and then you shall see—how I will like you.

Hear. O! that I could thus play with inclination!

Mar. Pshaw! but you don't tell me now.

Hear. There is not much to tell—where two such tender passions met, words had but faintly spoke them. The son conducted to the door, with sudden fear stopped short, and bursting into sighs, overcharged with shame and joy, had almost fainted in my arms: the father, touched with his concern, moved forward with a kindly smile to meet him. At this he took new life, and springing from his hold, fell prostrate at his feet; where mute, and trembling, for a while he lay: at length with streaming eyes, and faltering tongue, he begged his blessing, and his pardon; the tender father caught him in his arms, and dropping his fond head upon his cheek, kissed him, and sighed out, Heaven protect thee!—then gave into his hand the Royal pardon; and turning back his face to dry his manly eyes, he cried, Deserve this Royal mercy, Charles, and I am still thy father. The grateful youth, raising his heart-swollen voice, replied, May Heaven preserve the royal life that gave it. But here their passions grew too strong for farther speech: silent embraces, alternate sighs, and mingling tears, were all their language now. The moving scene became too tender for my eyes, and called, methought, for privacy; there unperceived I left them, to recover into breathing sense, and utterable joy.

Mar. Well! of all the inmost transports of the soul, there's none that dance into the heart, like friendly reconcilements.

Hear. Those transports might be ours, Maria, would you but try your power to pardon.

Mar. Which of those two now do you think was happiest at that meeting?

Hear. O! the father, doubtless; great souls feel a kind of honest glory in forgiving, that far exceeds the transport of receiving pardon.

Mar. Now I think to bend the stubborn mind to ask it is an equal conquest; and the joy superior to receive, where the heart wishes to be under obligations.

Hear. Put me into the happy boy's condition, and I may then, perhaps, resolve you better.

U

Mar. You shall positively bring him into acquaintance.

Hear. Upon my word I will.

Mar. And show him to all the women of taste ; and I'll have you call him my pretty fellow too.

Hear. I will indeed. But hear me——

Mar. I'm positive, if he had white stockings he would cut down all the dangles at Court in a fortnight !

Hear. O ! no doubt on't ; but——

Mar. You can't conceive how prettily he makes love now.

Hear. Not so well as you make your defence, Maria.

Mar. O Lord ! I had forget—he's to teach me Greek, too.

Hear. O, the trifling tyrant ! How long, Maria, do you think you can find out new evasions for what I say unto you ?

Mar. Lord, you are horrid silly ! But since 'tis love that makes you such a dunce—poor Heartly—I forgive you.

[Enter COLONEL, unseen.]

Hear. That's kind, however. But to complete my joy, be kinder yet—and——

Mar. O ! I can't, I can't. Lord ! did you never ride a horse-match ?

Hear. Was ever so wild a question ?

Mar. Because if you have, it runs in my head, you certainly galloped a mile beyond the winning post to make sure on't.

Hear. Now I understand you. But since you will have me touch everything so very tenderly, Maria, how shall I find proper words to ask you the lover's last necessary question ?

Mar. O ! there's a thousand points to be adjusted before that's answered.

Col. [coming unexpectedly between them.] Name them this moment then, for positively this is the last time of asking.

Mar. Pshaw ! Who sent for you ?

Col. I only came to teach you to speak plain English, my dear.

Mar. Lord ! mind your own business, can't you ?

Col. So I will ; for I will make you do more of yours in two minutes, than you would have done without me in a twelvemonth. Why, how now ! What ! do you think the man's to dangle after your ridiculous airs for ever ?

Mar. This is mighty pretty.

Col. You'll say so on Thursday sevenight (for let affairs take what turn they will in the family) that's positively your wedding-day. Nav, you shan't stir.

Mar. Was ever such assurance ?

Hear. Upon my life, madam, I am out of countenance : I don't know how to behave myself to him.

Mar. No, no, let him go on, only—— This is beyond whatever was known, sure !

Hear. Admirable ! I hope it will come to something. [Aside.]

Col. Ha ! ha ! If I were to leave you to yourselves now, what a couple of pretty out-of-countenance figures you would make ;

humming and hawing upon the vulgar points of jointure and pin-money. Come, come! I know what's proper on both sides; you shall leave it to me.

Hear. I had rather Maria would name her own terms to me.

Col. Have you a mind to anything particular? [To MARIA.]

Mar. Why sure! What! Do you think I'm only to be filled out here as you please, and sweetened, and supped up like a dish of Bohea?

Col. Why, pray madam, when your tea's ready, what have you to do but to drink it? But you, I suppose, expect a lover's heart, like your lamp, should be always flaming at your elbow, and when it's ready to go out, you indolently supply it with the spirit of contradiction.

Mar. And so you suppose, that your assurance has made an end of this matter?

Col. Not till you have given him your hand upon it.

Mar. That then would complete it?

Col. Perfectly.

Mar. Why then, take it, Heartly. [Giving her hand to HEARTLY.]

Hear. O soft surprise! ecstatic joy.

Mar. Now I presume you are in high triumph, sir.

Col. No, sister, now you are consistent with that good sense I always thought you mistress of. [To the COLONEL.]

Mar. I'm afraid, Mr. Heartly, we are both obliged to him.

Hear. If you think so, Maria, my heart—
Is under double obligations laid.

[Embracing him.]

Col. If it cements our friendship, I am overpaid.

[Exeunt.]

ACT V.

HEARTLY and MARIA.

Mar. Well now, Heartly, you have nothing to do but to look forward, and if possible to forget what I have been to you: though 'tis a horrid restraint you lay upon our sex: you first make it the business of your lives to blow up our vanity, and then preposterously expect we should be prudent and humble: that is, you invite us to a feast, where 'tis criminal to taste, or have an appetite; you put a sword into a child's hand, and then are angry if it does mischief.

Hear. You give up too much, Maria; I never treated you so: what might have been flattery to most women, was but honest truth to you.

Mar. Why, look you there now? Is not that enough to turn any poor woman into a changeling?

Hear. No, because it is true; charge me with a falsehood, and I submit.

Mar. Nay then, did you not once tell me, that all my airs and

follies were merely put on in compliance to the world, and that good sense was only natural to me ; that even my affectation (I have not forgot your words) carried more sincerity than the serious vows of other women.

Hear. By all my happiness I think so still.

Mar. What, seriously ?

Hear. Upon my soul I do.

Mar. Lord ! that's delightful ! Do you really love me then, Heartly ? Do tell me, for now I begin to believe everything you say to me. But don't neither—I am vain still—'twas my vanity that made me ask you.

Hear. Now I don't take it so.

Mar. There was some in't I am sure, though it begins to dwindle, I can tell you.

Hear. No matter, I love you as you are ; I would not have you lose your pleasantry, Maria.

Mar. Well, do, let me be silly sometimes.

Hear. O ! I can play with you, for that matter.

Mar. Pshaw ! you'll laugh at me.

Hear. Not while you are good in essentials.

Mar. Indeed I'll be very good.

Hear. O fie ! that will be the way to make me so.

Mar. Lord ! what signifies sense, where there is so much pleasure in folly ?

Hear. No perfect passion ever was without it ; the pleasure would subside were we always to be wise in it.

Mar. For my part I think so : but will you really stand to the agreement tho', that I have made with the Doctor ?

Hear. Why not ? You shall not break your word upon my account, tho' he might be a villain you gave it to.

Mar. Well, I take it as a compliment ; not but I have some hopes of getting over it, and justly too ; but don't let me tell you now. I love to surprise—though you shall know all if you desire it.

Hear. No, Maria, I don't want the secret ; I am satisfied in your inclination to trust me.

Mar. Well then, I'll keep the secret, only to show you, that you upon occasion may trust me with one.

Hear. After that, Maria, it would be wronging you to ask it ; but pray, madam, has the Doctor yet given you any proof of his having declined his interest to your father ?

Mar. Yes, he told me just now, he had brought him to pause upon it, and does not question in two days to complete it ; but desires in the meantime you will be ready and punctual with the premium.

Hear. Suppose I should talk with Sir John myself ; 'tis true he has slighted me of late, but however, I ought at least to ask his consent, though I have but little hopes of it.

Mar. By all means, do so. Here he comes. This may open another scene of action, too, that we are preparing for.

Enter SIR JOHN, and LADY WOODVIL, who walks apart with MARIA.

Sir John. Mr. Heartly, I am glad I have met with you here.

Hear. I have endeavoured twice to-day, sir, to pay my respects to you.

Sir John. Sir, I'll be plain with you.—I went out to avoid you; but where the welfare of a child is concerned you must not take it ill if we don't stand upon ceremony.—However, since I have reason now to be more in temper than perhaps I was at that time, I should be glad to talk with you.

Hear. I take it as a favour, sir.

Sir John. Sir,—Doctor Wolf informs me that he is well assured you were born the year before the Revolution. Now, sir, I should be glad to be well satisfied in that point; a greater consequence depending on it, perhaps, than you imagine.

Hear. Sir, I have been always told that was my age; but for your further satisfaction I appeal to the register.

Sir John. Sir, I dare believe you, and am glad to hear it.

Hear. But pray, sir, may I beg leave to ask, why you are so concerned to know this?

Sir John. Because, sir, if this be true, I am satisfied you may be a regular Christian; the doubt of which may have, perhaps, done you some disservice in my private opinion.

Hear. Sir, if that can reconcile me to it, I shall be thankful for the benefit, without considering why I that way came to deserve it.

Sir John. That argument might hold us now too long.—But, sir,—here's the case—your principles and mine have the misfortune to differ—your's being (as I take it) entirely on the Revolution side.

Hear. If I am not misinformed, sir, you yourself commanded a regiment in defence of it.

Sir John. I did so, and thought it just.—'Twould be fruitless, perhaps, to offer you the reasons that since have altered my opinion. But now, sir, even supposing that I err in principle, you must still allow, that conscience is the rule that every honest man ought to walk by.

Hear. 'Tis granted, sir.

Sir John. Then give me leave to tell you, sir, that giving you my daughter would be to act against that conscience I pretend to, and consequently the same ties oblige me to bestow her where the same principles with mine, I think, deserve her.—Now, sir, consult your own honour, and tell me, how you can still pursue my daughter, without doing violence to mine?

Hear. But, sir, to shorten this dispute, suppose the Doctor (whom I presume you design her for) actually consents to give me up his interest; might not that soften your objections to me?

Sir John. But why do you suppose, sir, he would give up his interest?

Hear. I only judge from what your daughter tells me, sir.

Sir John. My daughter !

Hear. I appeal to her.

Mar. And I appeal even to yourself, sir.—Has not the Doctor just now in the garden spoke in favour of Mr. Heartly to you? Nay, pray, sir, be plain, because more depends on that than you can easily imagine or believe.

Sir John. What senseless insinuation have you got in your head now?

Mar. Be so kind, sir, first to answer me, that I may be better able to inform you.

Sir John. Well, I own he has declined his interest in favour of Mr. Heartly. But I must tell you, madam, he did it in so modest, so friendly, so good natured, so conscientious a manner, that I now think myself more than ever bound in honour to espouse him.

Mar. But now, sir (only for argument sake) suppose I could prove that all this seeming virtue was utterly artificial; that his regard to Mr. Heartly was neither founded upon modesty, friendship, good nature, nor conscience; or, in short, that he has basely betrayed and sold the trust you made him; like a villain bartered, bargained to give me to Mr. Heartly for half the four thousand pounds you have valued his consent at—I say, suppose this were the case, where would be his virtue then, sir?

Sir John. And I say 'tis impious to suppose it.

Hear. Under favour, sir, how is it possible your daughter could know the Doctor had spoke to you upon this head, if he himself had not told her so, in consequence of his agreement?

Sir John. Sir, I don't admit your consequence. Her knowing it from him is no proof that he might not still resign her from a principle of modesty or good nature.

Mar. Then, sir, from what principle must you suppose that I accuse him?

Sir John. From an obstinate prejudice to all that's good and virtuous.

Mar. That's too hard, sir. What blot has stained my life, that you can think so of me? But, sir, the worst your opinion can provoke me to, is to marry Mr. Heartly, without either his consent or yours.

Sir John. What, do you brave me, madam?

Mar. [*in tears.*] No, sir, but I scorn a lie, and will so far vindicate my integrity as to insist on your believing me; if not, as a child whom you abandon, I have a right to throw myself into other arms for protection.

Hear. O, Maria! how thy spirit charms me. [*Apart to her.*]

Sir John. I am confounded! Those tears cannot be counterfeit, nor can this be true.

Lady W. Indeed, my dear, I fear it is; it would be cruel to her concern to think it wholly false. Can you suppose she'd urge so gross an accusation only to expose herself to the justice of your resentment?

Sir John. What, are you against him too?—then he has no friend but me, and I cannot, at so short a warning, give him up to infamy and baseness.

Lady W. Good sir, be composed, and ask your heart one farther question.

Sir John. What would you say to me?

Lady W. In all our mutual course of happiness, have I ever yet deceived you with a falsehood?

Sir John. Never, I grant it; nor has my honest heart yet wronged thy goodness with a jealous thought of it.

Lady W. Would you then believe me should I accuse him too, even of crimes that virtue blushes but to mention?

Sir John. To what extravagance would you drive me?

Lady W. I would before have undeceived you, when his late artifice turned the honest duty of your son into his own reproach and ruin; but knowing then your temper was inaccessible, I durst not offer it. But now, in better hope of being believed, I here avow the truth of all he was accused of then.

Sir John. Will you distract me? my senses could not be deceived.

Lady W. Indeed they were; he saw you listening, and at the instant turned his impious, barefaced love to me into equivocal intercessions, pretending to Maria.

Sir John. You startle me.

Lady W. Could you otherwise suppose your son would have brought you to be witness of his own weak malice in accusing him?

Sir John. I'm all astonishment!

Lady W. Come, sir, suspend your wonder, respite your belief, even of this, till grosser evidence convinces you. Suppose I here, before your face, should let you see his villainy, make him repeat his odious love to me, at once throw off his mask, and show the barefaced traitor.

Sir John. Is it possible? Make me but witness of that fact, and I shall soon accuse myself, and own my folly equal to his baseness. But pardon me, as I in such a case would not believe even him accusing you, so am I bound in equal charity to think you yet may be deceived in what you charge on him.

Lady W. 'Tis just—let it be so—we'll yet suppose him innocent, till you yourself pronounce him guilty; and since I have staked my faith upon the truth of what I urge, 'tis fit we bring him to immediate trial; but then, sir, I must beg you to descend even to the poor shifts we are reduced to.

Sir John. All—to anything—to ease me of my doubts; propose them.

Lady W. They that would set toils for beasts of prey must lurk in humble caves to watch their haunts.

Sir John. Place me where you please.

Lady W. Under this table is your only stand, the carpet will conceal you.

Sir John. Be it so, I'll take my post; what more?

Lady W. Mr. Heartly, shall we beg your leave, and you, Maria, take the least suspected way to send the Doctor to me immediately.

Mar. I have a thought will do it, madam.—Come, sir.

[*Exeunt MARIA and HEARTLY.*]

Lady W. Here, sir, take this cushion—you will be easier. [SIR JOHN goes under the table.] Now, sir, you must consider how desperate a disease I have undertaken to cure, therefore you must not wince nor stir too soon at any freedom you observe me take with him; be sure lie close and still, and when the proof is full, appear at your discretion.

Sir John. Fear not, I'll be patient.

Lady W. Hush! he comes.

Enter DOCTOR, with a book.

Doct. Your woman told me, madam, you were here alone, and desired to speak with me.

Lady W. I did, sir, but that we may be sure we are alone, pray shut the outward door, and see that passage to be clear; another surprise might ruin us—is all safe?

Doct. I have taken care, madam.

Lady W. I am afraid I interrupt your meditations.

Doct. Say rather you improve them; you, madam, were the subject of my solitary thoughts. I take in all the little aids I can to guard my frailty, and truly I have received great consolation from an unfortunate example here before me.

Lady W. Pray of what kind, sir?

Doct. I had just dipped into poor Eloisa's passion for Abelard. It is indeed a piteous conflict! How terrible! How penitent a sense she shows of guilty pleasures past, and fruitless pains to shut them from her memory.

Lady W. I have read her story, sir.

Doct. Is it not pitiful?

Lady W. A heart of stone might feel for her.

Doct. Oh! think then what I endure for you, such are my pains; but such is my sincerity, though I fear my being reduced to feign a passion for Maria, in my late surprise, has done dishonour to the vows I then preferred to you.

Lady W. 'Twas on that point I wanted now to talk with you, not knowing then how far you might mistake my silence. Now, had I closed with the Colonel in accusing you, it would have been plain I was your enemy; as, had I joined in your defence against him, it had been as grossly evident I was his; but since I have uses for his friendship, and as I saw your credit with Sir John needed no support, I hope you'll think betwixt the two extremes I have acted but a prudent part.

Doct. Let me presume to hope, then, what I did you judge was self-defence and pure necessity.

Lady W. 'Twas wonderful! surprising to perfection! The wit of it—but I won't tell you what effect it had upon me.

Doct. Why, madam ? let me beseech you.

Lady W. No, 'twas nothing—beside—what need you ask me ?

Doct. Why do you thus decoy my foolish heart, and feed it with such Hybla drops of flattery ? You cannot sure think kindly of me.

Lady W. O well-feigned fear ! You too, I find, can flatter in your turn. You know how well the subtle force of modesty prevails. O men ! men ! men !

Doct. 'Twere arrogance to think I have deserved this goodness ; but treat me as you please, I'll be at least sincere to you, and frankly own, I still suspect that all this softening favour is but artifice.

Lady W. Well ! well ! I'd have you think so.

Doct. What transport would it give to be assured I wrong you ! but oh ! I fear this shadow of compliance is only meant to lure me from Maria, and then as fond Ixions were of old, to fill my arms with air.

Lady W. Methinks this doubt of me seems rather founded on your second thoughts of not resigning her ; 'tis she, I find, is your substantial happiness.

Doct. O that you could but fear I thought so ! how easy 'twere to prove my coldness, or my love.

Lady W. Oh, sir, you have convinced me now of both.

Doct. Can all this pretty anger then be real ?—take heed, fair creature, it flatters more than kindness.

Lady W. I can assure you, sir, I should have spared you this trouble, had I known how deeply you were engaged to her.

Doct. Nay, then, I must believe you ; but indeed you wrong me ; to prove my innocence, 'tis not an hour since I pressed Sir John to give Maria to young Heartly.

Lady W. O ! all artifice ! you knew that modest resignation would make Sir John but warmer in your interest.

Doct. Since you will rip the secret from my heart—know then, I actually have sold her, like a bawble, to her childish lover, for two thousand times her value.

Lady W. Are you serious ?

Doct. As this is true, or false, may I in you be blest, or miserable.

Lady W. But how can you suppose Sir John will ever hear of it.

Doct. Alas ! poor man ! he knows not his own weakness, he's moulded into any shape, if you but gently stroke his humour. I dare depend on his consent ; beside, I intend to-morrow to persuade him it is for the interest of our cause it should be so, and then I have him sure.

Lady W. Fie ! how is that possible ? he can't be so implicitly credulous. You don't take him sure for a Roman Catholic.

Doct. Um—not absolutely—but, poor soul ! he little thinks how near he is one. 'Tis true, name to him but Rome, or Popery, he startles, as at a monster. But gild its grossest doctrines with the style of English Catholic, he swallows down the poison like a cordial.

Lady W. Nay, if he's so far within your power, it cannot fail ; he must consent. Well, sir, now I give you leave to guess the reason,

why I too, at our last meeting, so warmly pressed you to resign Maria.

Doct. Is it possible? was I then so early your concern?

Lady W. You cannot blame me sure for having there opposed your happiness.

Doct. I die upon the transport.

[*Taking her hand.*]

Lady W. Be sure you are secret now; your least imprudence makes these, like fairy favours, vanish in a moment.

Doct. How can you form so vain a fear?

Lady W. Call it not vain, for let our converse end in what it may, you still shall find my fame is dear to me as life.

Doct. Where can it find so sure a guard? The grave austerity of my life will strike suspicion dumb, and yours may mock the malice of detraction. I am no giddy, loose-lived courtier, whose false professions end only in his boast of favours. No, fair, spotless miracle, the mysteries of love are only fit for hearts recluse and elevate as mine—my happiness, like yours, depending on my secrecy.

Lady W. 'Tis you must answer for this folly.

Doct. I take it whole upon myself. The guilt be only mine, but be our transports mutual.—Come, lovely creature! let us withdraw to privacy, where murmuring love shall hush thy fears.

[*SIR JOHN, stepping softly behind him, seizes him by the throat.*]

Sir John. Traitor.

Doct. Ah!

[*Astonished.*]

Sir John. Is this thy sanctity? this thy doctrine? these thy mediations? If, stung with my abuses, I now should stab thee to the heart, what devil durst murmur 'twere not an act of justice? But since thy vile hypocrisy, unmasked, must make mankind abhor thee, be thy own shame thy living punishment.

Doct. Do! Triumph, sir; your artifice has well succeeded. I see your ends! you needed not so deep a plot to part with me.

[*Trembling.*]

Sir John. Suppress thy weak evasions. Ungrateful wretch! have I for this redeemed thee from the jaws of gaping poverty, fed, clothed, loved, preferred thee to my bosom, to my family, and fortune; wife, children, friends, servants, all that were not friends to thee, accounted as my enemies?—nay more, to crown my faith in thee, I have relied on thy integrity even for my future happiness; and how hast thou, in one short day, requited me? Taking the advantage of my blinded passion, thou hast turned the duty of my son to his undoing; sordidly hast sold the trust I made thee of my daughter; attempted, like a felonious traitor, to seduce my wife, and hast, I fear, with poisonous doctrines too, ensnared my soul.

Lady W. Now heaven be praised, his heart seems conscious of his error.

[*Aside.*]

Sir John. But why do I reproach thee? had I not been the weakest of mankind, thou never couldst have proved so great a villain. Whether heaven intends all this to punish, or to save me,

yet I know not; my senses stagger at the view, and my reflection's lost in wild astonishment. [*He stands musing.*]

Doct. This snare was worthy of you, madam; 'tis you have made this villain of me. [*Apart to LADY WOODVIL.*]

Lady W. You would have made me worse, but I have only shown him what you were before.

Doct. I thank you.

Lady W. Thank your own ingratitude and wickedness; but I must now pursue my victory. [*Exit LADY WOODVIL.*]

Doct. [*apart.*] No. It ends not here. He was not brought to listen to this proof alone! There's something deeper yet designed against me. I must be speedy. Suppose I talk with Charles; alarm him with our common danger; point out his ruin as our only means of safety, and like the panther in the toil provoked, turn short with vengeance on my hunters!

Sir John. What! still within my sight? Of all my follies, which is it tells thee that I now shall keep my temper.

Doct. [*turning boldly to him.*] Whom do you menace?—me, sir. Reflect upon your own condition first, and where you are.

Sir John. What would the villain drive at? I prithee leave me; I cannot look on thee! thy overbearing insolence confounds me. But since thy wickedness has turned my eyes upon myself, and to thy crimes detected, I hope to owe my future innocence, as the sore wound the viper gives, the viper best can cure; for that one good may Heaven like me forgive thee; but seek thy bidding in some other place; out of my house, this instant, hence! begone! and see my shameful face no more.

Doct. Nay, then, 'tis time to be myself, and let you know, that I am master here. Turn you out, sir; this house is mine; and now, sir, at your peril, dare to insult me.

Sir John. O! heaven! 'tis true, thou hast disarmed my justice, and turned its sword into my own weak bosom. I had forgot my folly; 'tis fit it should be so, and heaven is just, at once to let me see my crime, and punishment. O, my poor injured son! Whither shall I fly to hide me from the world.

Enter LADY WOODVIL.

Lady W. Whither are you going, sir?

Sir John. I know not; but here it seems I am a trespasser, the master of this house has warned me hence, and since the right is now in him, 'tis just I should resign it.

Lady W. You shall not stir. He dares not act with such abandoned insolence. No, sir, possession still is yours. If he pretends a right, let him by open course of law maintain it.

Doct. Are these the shifts you are reduced to? No, madam, I shall not wait so slow a vengeance; you'll find I have a shorter way to rout you. Here! Charles! [*Exit DOCTOR.*]

Sir John. Nay, then, there is an end of all. I have provoked a serpent. My life, I see, must pay the forfeit of my folly!

Lady W. Come, sir, take heart! Your life, in spite of him, is free, and, I hope, your actions too. However, tell me freely, have you rashly done anything for which the law may question you?

Sir John. I think not strictly; 'tis true I have lately trusted him with sums of money, which he pretended, if accounted for, might endanger both of us.

Lady W. O, the subtle villain! Those sums are innocent, I dare answer for them. But is there nothing more?

Sir John. Not that I can call to mind, more criminal.

Lady W. Pray tell the worst, that we may arm against him.

Sir John. Sometimes with my own hand I have relieved the wants of wretched prisoners to the State.

Lady W. We have no laws that frown on acts of charity; if that were criminal, the Government itself is guilty.

Sir John. How far our private converse may affect me—that I know not. If Charles betrays me not, I think his malice cannot reach me.

Lady W. Then, sir, be easy, for he has lost his influence there. Charles has long since perceived his villainy, and grew from thence a secret convert to the cause of truth and loyalty, of which he has given such meritorious proof that Mr. Heartly and your son this very day, sir, have obtained his pardon.

Sir John. You tell me wonders! Pardoned! and a convert, say you! How strongly are our hearts persuaded by example! What darkness have I wandered in! How amiable is such Royal mercy! yet with what hardened malice has that slave traduced it?

Enter MARIA, hastily.

Mar. O, sir! I am frightened out of my senses! For Heaven's sake begone! Fly this moment!—this wicked fellow has designs upon your life.

Lady W. How?

Sir John. What dost thou mean?—explain.

Mar. As I was passing by the hall, I heard him earnest in discourse with Charles, and, upon their naming you, I stopped awhile to listen, where I heard the Doctor urge to him, that you were false at heart; that, from your late frivolous pretence to break with him, he was convinced your malice now would stop at nothing to undo him; that Charles himself was equally in danger; and that, to save your own life, you certainly designed to sacrifice theirs to the Government, which there was no possibility of preventing, but by their immediate joining in a charge of treason against you.

Lady W. O, the villain! 'Tis well we are secure in Charles.

Sir John. If we are not, why, be it as it may, I will not stir. I'll stand upon my innocence, or, if that's betrayed, will throw me on the mercy of that Royal breast whose virtues my credulity has injured.

Lady W. and Mar. Ah! [A pistol is heard from within.]

Sir John. What means that pistol?

Lady W. Don't stir, I beg you, sir.

Mar. What terrors has this monster brought into our family?

Lady W. What will it end in?

Sir John. How wretched has my folly made me?

Lady W. How now! what's the matter?

Enter BETTY.

Bet. O, dear madam! I shall faint away; there's murder doing.

Sir John. Who?—where?—what is it?

Bet. The Doctor, sir, and Mr. Charles, were at high words just now in the hall, and upon a sudden there was a pistol fired between them. Oh! I am afraid poor Mr. Charles is killed.

Sir John. How?

Bet. Oh! here he comes himself, sir; he will tell you more.

Enter HEARTLY, CHARLES, and the DOCTOR, held by SERVANTS.

Hear. Here, bring in this ruffian, this is villainy beyond example.

Sir John. What means this outrage?

Lady W. I tremble.

Charles. Don't be alarmed, madam, there's no mischief done; what was intended, the Doctor here can best inform you.

Doct. [*To HEARTLY.*] You, sir, shall answer for this insult? What am I held for?—who's here, that dares assume a right to question me?

Hear. Keep your temper, sir, we'll release you presently; but Sir John must first know the bottom of his obligations to you.

Sir John. Mr. Heartly, I am ashamed to look on you.

Doct. What, sir! shall my own servant abuse me, brave me, lift his hand against me, and I not dare to punish him.

Hear. Your servant, sir—we know him better.

Doct. Then, sir, I demand my liberty, that the Government too may know him.

Charles. Yes, and let it too be known, you first seduced me to rebel, and now would have me expiate my offence with perjury.

Doct. How, sir?

Charles. Yes, perjury! for such it must have been, should I have charged, as you'd have had me, this gentleman with treason. What facts have I been privy to, that reach that name? The worst I know of him, is, that all the factious falsehoods you have raised against the best of princes, he, blinded with your hypocrisy, believed.

Doct. 'Tis well, sir, you are protected now.

Charles. This, sir, in short has been our cause of quarrel. The Doctor, finding I received with coldness his vile designs against your life, began to offer menaces on mine, if I complied not; at which I, smiling, told him the disappointments of his love had made

him desperate. This stung him into rage, and fastening at my throat, he answered, Villain! you'll be humbler, when you groan in chains for this. Here indeed all temper left me, when, disengaging from his hold, with one home blow I felled him reeling to the pavement. At this grown desperate, he ran with fury to some pistols that hung above the chimney, to revenge him. I in the instant as he reached one, seized upon his wrist, and as we grappled, sir, the pistol firing to the ceiling, alarmed the family, when Mr. Heartly and your servants rushed in to part us.

Sir John. Insatiate villain! O my shame!

Doct. Well, sir! now you have heard this mighty charge! what have you more against me?

Hear. More, sir, I hope is needless, but if Sir John is yet unsatisfied—

Sir John. O! I have seen too much! every new instance of his wickedness but adds afresh to my confusion.

Lady W. Now, sir, is your time.

[*Apart.*

Hear. I go this minute, madam.

[*Apart.*

Doct. I value not your whispered menaces, for know, to your confusion, my vengeance is not yet defeated. You'll find, sir, that to rebel, or to conceal a rebel, are in the eye of law both equal acts of treason. That fact, I'm sure, is evident against you; there! there stands in proof the stripling traitor you have sheltered! This, sir, your whole family can charge you with, and swear it home they shall, or load their souls with perjury. But then, to dash your few remaining days with bitterness of misery, remember, I, sir, whom mortally you hate, succeed the instant heir to your possessions. Now farewell, and let disgrace and beggary be your children's portion.

As he is going out the COLONEL stops him.

Col. Hold, sir, not so fast, you cannot pass.

Doct. Who, sir, shall dare to stop me?

Col. Within there! march!

Enter a MESSENGER, with a file of Musketeers.

Mess. Is your name Wolf, sir?

Doct. What if it be, sir?

Mess. Then, sir, I have a warrant against you for high treason.

Doct. Me, sir?

[*Startled.*

Mess. Do you know one Colonel Perth, sir?

Doct. Ha! then I am betrayed indeed.

Hear. This Perth, it seems, sir, has managed his correspondence at Avignon, from whence he came last night express; but the Government having immediate notice of his arrival, he was this morning seized, and examined before the Council, where, among other facts, he has confessed he knew the Doctor actually in arms at the first rebellious rising in Northumberland, which has been since by other witnesses confirmed,

Col. And, sir, to convince you, that even the doctrine he has broached could never flow from the pure fountain of our established faith, here are affidavits in my hand that prove him, under his disguise, a lurking emissary of Rome ; that he is actually a priest in Popish orders, and has several times been seen, as such, to officiate at public Mass in the church of Notre Dame, at Antwerp.

Mar. Hear. and Lady W. How !

Sir John. I start with horror, even, at the danger I am freed from.

Col. And now, sir, had not your insatiate villanies to this family forced me to this close inquiry into your private life, perhaps you might have passed unquestioned among the rout of enemies whom our Government despises.

Doct. Well, sir ! Now, then, you know your worst of me. But know, what you call criminal may yet before your triumph is secure, not only find its pardon, but reward. I yet may live, sir, to retort your insult ; at least the days that are allotted me will want for no supports of life while this conveyance calls me master.

Sir John. There ! there indeed he stings me to the heart ! for that rash act reproach and endless shame will haunt me.

Mar. No, sir ; be comforted ! for even there, too, his abandoned hope must leave him.

Sir John. Why dost thou torture me ! Did I not sign that deed ?

Mar. Yes, sir ; but in that deed you'll find my brother, not that traitor, is your heir ; for know the fatal deed, which you intended, sir, to sign, is here, even yet unsealed and innocent.

Omnes. Ha ! [*The Doctor hastily opens the deed to examine it, and all the company seem surprised.*]

Sir John. What means she ?

Mar. I mean, sir, that this deed, by accident falling into this gentleman's hands, his generous concern for our family discovered it to me ; when I, reduced to this extremity, instantly procured that other to be drawn exactly like it, which, in your impatience, sir, to execute, passed unsuspected for the original. Their only difference is, that, wherever here you read the Doctor's name, there you'll find my brother's only, throughout and wholly, sir, in every article investing him in all that right, and title, which you intended for your mortal enemy.

Doct. Distraction ! Outwitted by a brainless girl.

[*Throws down the writing in rage.*
All the servants having attended to the discovery, break out into huzzas of joy, &c., while SIR JOHN, the COLONEL, CHARLES and MARIA severally embrace : HEARTLY and LADY WOODVIL silently join in their congratulations.]

Doct. I cannot bear their irksome joy. Come, sir, lead me where you please ; a dungeon would relieve me now.

Col. Secure your prisoner.

